BUSINESS / B1

Peso hits 7-year high: 45.25 to $1

NEWS / A5

Oakwood mutineers claim: If Gringo is innocent, so are we

WORLD / A27

Britain expels Russian diplomats over Moscow refusal to hand over murder suspect

2BU! / C1

Undiscovered hangouts, shopping haunts, 24-hr bar, other city secrets

DENR to employees: Your job or your Friendster

By TJ Burgonio

YOUR JOB OR YOUR Friendster account?

In this age of wireless technology, some employees have become so tech-savvy,

DENR/ A23

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, July 18, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 220 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Ex-Lacson aide faces 10 years in US prison

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY—A FORMER PHILIPPINE National Police officer faces a sentence of up to 10 years in prison on Tuesday for his role in a plot in which he obtained secret US documents in an effort to undermine the Philippine government.

Federal prosecutors are seeking the maximum 10-year term for Michael Ray Aquino.

EX-LACSON/ A23

Summit to GMA: Stop it

Law experts urge gov't action to end political slays

By Norman Bordadora and Leila B. Salaverria

A HIGH-POWERED JUDICIAL summit ended yesterday with calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to order a stop to political killings and for the adoption of new laws that would empower investigators to search state and private premises for victims of forced disappearances.

Experts who attended the two-day summit also proposed giving more prosecutory powers to the Commission on Human Rights which was perceived to be a "more trustworthy" arm of the government than the Department of Justice.

These were among the recommendations made by various working groups at the close of the National Consultative Summit on Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances Searching for Solutions held at the Manila Hotel and organized by the Supreme Court to stop escalating human rights abuses.

The summit was attended by about 250 experts representing various government agencies, including the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police, members of Congress and the judiciary, nongovernmental groups, the academe, media and foreign organizations.

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said all proposals made by the working groups would be collated by the high tribunal and transmitted to the appropriate national agencies.

"The summit will remain nonpoliti-

SUMMIT/ A10

AT A GLANCE

- Expand CHR's prosecution powers as it is perceived to be "more trustworthy" than DOJ.
- Adopt international laws on command responsibility and determine if government can be held liable for damages.
- Empower probers to search government/private premises for victims of enforced disappearances.
- Make killings of journalists/judges/activists a new crime separate from murder/kidnapping.
- Forward proposals in this "non-political summit" to concerned government branches/agencies.

HISTORIC two-day summit initiated, convened and conducted by the Supreme Court to hold consultations and search for solutions to extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances was defined by the wide open multisectoral participation of 250 delegates, including 28 foreign diplomats. Which also spelled its success. Now, the hard part begins.

28 more cases vs antiterror law filed at SC

By Leila B. Salaverria and Jerome Aning

OPPOSITION TO THE HUMAN SECURITY Act (HSA) of 2007 is snowballing.

Quoting Chief Justice Reynato Puno's fighting words against the war on terror's negative effect on human rights, 28 individuals and groups yesterday added their voices to those challenging the constitutionality of the HSA, or Republic Act No. 9372.

Even the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (or the Aglipayan Church) called for the repeal of the law, saying it was "an outright mockery [of] the democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution" and "a blatant assault on our constitutional rights and sovereignty as a people."

Supreme Bishop Godofredo David said the Aglipayan Church was "strongly exhort[ing] President Macapagal-Arroyo to

28 MORE/ A8

Anakpawis member shot dead in Leyte

By Alcuin Papa *in Manila* and Vicente Labro, *Inquirer Visayas*

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE MILITANT party-list group Anakpawis died hours after being shot in Leyte yesterday, the second and last day of the Supreme Court-led summit on extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances.

Charlie Solayao, whose age was variously stated as 50 and 52, was shot five times by an unidentified gunman on a motorcycle in Barangay 71 in Naga-Naga.

ANAKPAWIS/ A8

Puno lost judge-brother to assassin

By Volt Contreras

HE LOST HIS OLDEST BROTHER, A judge, to an assassin's bullet in 1977.

Thirty years later, Chief Justice Reynato Puno would help the nation grapple with unabated extrajudicial killings using the instrument he knows best—the law.

By calling for a two-day summit on the killings, the country's 22nd Chief Justice has practically wiped the dust off Philippine legal tenets for possible upgrade, hopefully to enable the system to catch up, so to speak, with the gunman's getaway vehicle.

Puno's convening of the National Consultative Summit on Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances, which ended yesterday at the Manila Hotel, also seemed to have broken the familiar mold of a passive judiciary and showed how it could be a proactive force.

Only about five delegates at the Manila Hotel's Centennial Hall gave him a standing ovation when he formally opened the summit on Monday.

Everyone applauded on their feet when he brought it to a close.

But more than reaping "prodigious" inputs, Puno said, "I like to believe that this summit has demonstrated that Filipinos can be one and, therefore, there is no reason to abandon hope in the Filipino.

"Let us engage in a conspiracy of hope," he said.

Puno noted how one writer defined "freedom as the distance between the hunted and the hunter." That may be

PUNO/ A10

PUNO: A conspiracy of hope REM ZAMORA

GASP FROM THE PAST: Imelda Marcos returns to PGH, a beneficiary of her good works as well as the cause of malversation raps against her. RODEL ROTONI

Imelda visits PGH, 'scene of crime'

By Fe Zamora

FORMER FIRST LADY IMELDA MARCOS yesterday walked the halls of a controversial eight-story building at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH), thankful that her conviction—and eventual acquittal—for allegedly misusing government funds to construct the building "were not in vain."

"This hospital was built without a cent from the government," Marcos declared, "and for this I was tried and convicted and sentenced to 43 years in

IMELDA/ A22

Memorial to fallen tree: Pining for Baguio pine

By Vincent Cabreza *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

BAGUIO CITY—RESIDENTS OPENED their Sunday paper to find a full-page obituary of a pine tree.

The P20,480 notice in the Baguio Midland Courier was paid for by American teacher Thomas Ewing, who had tried to generate protests against a local university's decision to cut down a pine tree to make way for a day-care center and a water tank.

Ewing said he wanted to ignite the community's anger so it would protect other trees that are endangered by development projects.

Except for a small group of volunteers, called the Sea of Green Movement, who share Ewing's passion for nature, many residents appeared oblivious to his crusade against the action of officials of Saint Louis University (SLU).

The tree was finally cut down on June 15.

The advertisement was a memorial to the "SLU pine tree needlessly and merci-

MEMORIAL/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2007

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Dacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY SCHATZI GUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/07/17/07 SOURCE PAGASA

House rivals court opposition

REP. JOSE DE VENECIA OF THE ruling Lakas-CMD believes he already has the numbers to clinch a fifth term as Speaker of the House of Representatives but his rival Rep. Pablo Garcia of Cebu has two more cards up his sleeve.

Garcia's supporters in the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) party, a member of the ruling coalition, are calling for a secret vote and are also out to cut a deal with the opposition bloc in a last ditch effort to wrest the speakership from De Venecia when the 14th Congress convenes on July 23.

De Venecia's camp, which now claims 183 representatives in the pocket, are understandably against the move to choose the speaker through secret balloting. "Secrecy is the cover for turncoats," said majority leader Edcel Lagman.

But on the possibility that the 32-member opposition bloc may produce some swing votes, De Venecia is not taking any chances.

Both De Venecia and Garcia are set to meet separately with the minority bloc today, purportedly to assure the opposition of minority leadership through a change in House rules—in exchange for a little help during the hotly contested speakership vote.

A House rule says the second-placer in the speakership contest will be the House minority leader. This would not be a problem if one majority candidate and one minority candidate is nominated, as is usually the case. But the serious split in the majority coalition raises the possibility that Garcia (or De Venecia) could end up leading the minority.

San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, who is expected to be declared the chosen minority leader at today's Genuine Opposition national convention at the Club Filipino, said they were "prepared to listen."

"This is not a proposal for us to join the majority. That is out of the question. But we want to hear what their proposal for reforms in the House of Representatives will be."

The opposition apparently hopes to turn the rivalry in the majority opposition into some sort of bargaining chip. Opposition Rep. Rufus Rodriguez of Cagayan de Oro confirmed that today's meetings with Garcia (scheduled 8 a.m.) and De Venecia (2 p.m.) were most likely meant to court the minority's support.

His own estimate is that the majority coalition members are still thinly divided, 100 and 80, in favor of either De Venecia or Garcia.

"No one can really tell who has the numbers," he told the INQUIRER. "That's why both camps are banking on the opposition to deliver the crucial swing votes."

In both meetings, the minority's steering committee said it would raise the matter of amending the rules regarding the election of speaker, and the majority and minority leaders.

Both De Venecia and Garcia had earlier promised not to seek the minority post in case they lost in the election for speaker on Monday.

But Rodriguez said they want something in writing. Yesterday he filed a resolution seeking to amend Section 7 of the rules. Under his proposal, congressmen will hold separate elections for speaker, majority leader and minority leader.

"We want them to commit that there will be a change of rules," Rodriguez said.

Their individual commitments don't mean anything unless the rules are changed, he said.

"They're not binding because the rules are there," he explained. "If the rules are not amended, (the matter) will be up to their own volition, their own grace. We don't want that. We want a clear-cut rule that will not make (the choice of minority leader) an automatic thing."

Majority leader-designate Arthur Defensor yesterday said the ruling coalition was already making moves to amend and update obsolete provisions of the rules "if only to ensure that a member of the opposition gets the minority leader's post.

"We cannot in conscience tolerate the emergence of a company union in Congress as this will ruin the integrity of lawmaking," Defensor said, referring to the possibility that Garcia may claim the position if he loses against De Venecia.

But Defensor said Congress cannot amend the rules before the speaker is elected on opening day. *Christian V. Esguerra*

BARGAINING CHIP: Opposition leaders of the House of Representatives—Rufus Rodriguez, Roilo Golez, Ronaldo Zamora, Darlene Antonino and Satur Ocampo—in a press conference with Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay. JOAN BONDOC

Chiz blames partymates for loss of Senate

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

NEOPHYTE SEN. FRANCIS "Chiz" Escudero has lashed out at his colleagues in the opposition, saying they were responsible for their bloc's failure to wrest control of the Senate from the administration bloc.

Escudero was reacting to criticism from his colleagues after it was learned he was going to vote for Sen. Manuel Villar for Senate President when the 14th Congress opens on July 23.

Yesterday, Escudero confirmed Villar had his vote.

Although Villar ran for reelection last May under the Genuine Opposition ticket, oppositionists in the Senate preferred that administration arch-critic Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel be their candidate.

Villar is still best remembered as the Speaker who railroaded deposed President Joseph Estrada's impeachment case through the House and up to the Senate for trial.

Escudero said the Senate presidency race was about "personalities, not issues."

"*Away ng personalidad ito at hindi away ng isyu* (This is a clash of personalities, not issues)," he said.

He said he gave Villar his "personal commitment" shortly after the May 14 election.

"He was the incumbent Senate President. He ran with the opposition. No one had indicated that they were interested in the position. I don't see any reason how or why one would not be given that commitment," Escudero told reporters in his new Senate office yesterday.

Although eight of the 12 senators elected in May were with the Genuine Opposition, the Senate opposition bloc failed to muster the minimum 13 votes needed to take the Senate presidency.

Villar turned to the administration bloc to get 13 votes. He had the support of eight administration senators (excluding newly proclaimed Juan Miguel Zubiri), two independent and three opposition senators—Jinggoy Estrada, Alan Peter Cayetano and Escudero.

Pimentel received eight votes and would likely remain the minority leader.

He said the opposition could have consolidated its election victory had it chosen to support Villar instead of Pimentel.

"That was an option," he said.

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Defiant Bedol questions Comelec jurisdiction

By Jerome Aning

CONTROVERSIAL MAGUINDANAO ELECtion supervisor Lintang Bedol showed up at the Commission on Elections yesterday and questioned the agency's authority to hear the indirect contempt charge against him.

But the Comelec commissioners flatly denied a motion by Bedol's lawyer, Andre Bon Tagum, to dismiss the charge for lack of jurisdiction and appeared annoyed when Tagum demanded the denial be put in writing so that his client could question it.

"We regret we cannot submit to the jurisdiction of the Comelec unless there is a written explanation (of the agency's assertion of its jurisdiction) and we have availed [ourselves] of legal remedies," Tagum said.

Tagum also drew the commissioners' ire after he commented that the case against his client was being "railroaded" and for raising the issue of the Comelec's impartiality.

The indirect contempt charge stemmed from Bedol's repeated failure to answer summonses and subpoenas issued to him by the Comelec sitting as the National Board of Canvassers.

The NBC had called for Bedol to explain the allegations of irregularities in the elections in Maguindanao, particularly how the administration's Team Unity slate was able to sweep the senatorial race, a feat the Comelec itself described as "statistically improbable."

In particular, Bedol was asked to bring the municipal certificates of canvass (CoCs) and statements of votes (SoVs) in his possession to support TU's 12-0 victory as stated in the provincial CoC.

But Bedol claimed the documents had been stolen, forcing the Comelec to look for the other copies of the municipal CoCs and SoVs for a recanvass.

The Maguindanao vote determined the outcome of the contest for the 12th Senate slot between TU's Juan Miguel Zubiri and the Genuine Opposition's Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III.

Zubiri was proclaimed on Saturday while Pimentel said he would continue to question his victory.

At the end of the yesterday's hearing, the Comelec commissioners gave Bedol 10 more days to submit a final supplemental memorandum in his defense.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said the poll body would render a decision on Aug. 7, but added that Bedol could still stop the Comelec from acting further.

BEDOL

Marcos energy minister dies at 79

By Abigail Ho

FORMER ENERGY MINISTER GERONIMO Velasco has died in San Francisco, California, at age 79, according to Agnes de Jesus, a senior official of the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp.

De Jesus said yesterday she did not know the circumstances of Velasco's death but he appeared to have died from complications of a lingering illness.

Velasco was the energy minister during the martial law regime of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

In a statement, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said: "We salute this giant in the Philippine energy sector. His pioneering initiatives in geothermal energy created viable business entities which will continue to benefit this country and generations of its people."

5 Customs men charged with graft

By Michelle V. Remo

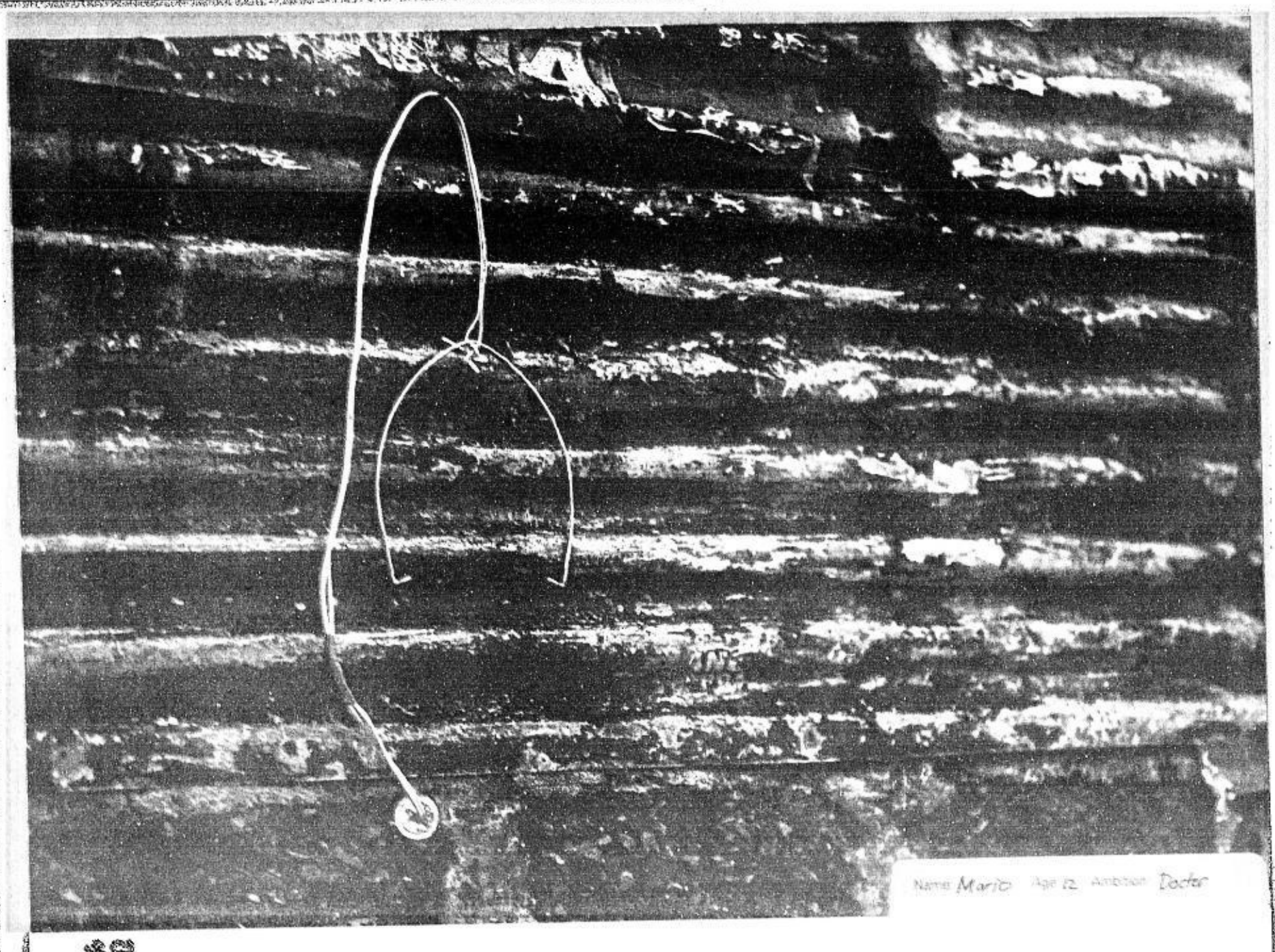
FIVE EMPLOYEES OF THE BUREAU of Customs, including the former head of its anti-smuggling task force, were charged before the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday for allegedly allowing smuggled meat to enter the country.

The Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS), an anti-corruption unit in the Department of Finance, said the five were involved in the diversion late last year of four vans of smuggled pork.

The five were identified as: Alexander Arcilla, former executive director of the Task Force Anti-Smuggling; Facundo Bitanga, acting chief of the BOC cargo disposal division; Dionisio Menil, acting warehouseman at the BOC in Port Area, Manila; Nanie Koh, acting principal examiner at the cargo disposal division in BOC Port Area; and Roger Manlangit, examiner at the cargo disposal division at the BOC in Port Area.

"As executive director of TFAS, he knows, or ought to know that he performs an important role in the examination and taking of inventory of seized items. For all his shortcomings in the examination and taking of inventory of seized goods, Atty. Arcilla has shown his utter lack of dedication to the functions of his office," RIPS said in the complaint.

RIPS also said that Koh, Manlangit and Menil were also liable because they failed to completely examine and take an inventory of the shipments, which were part of their duties.



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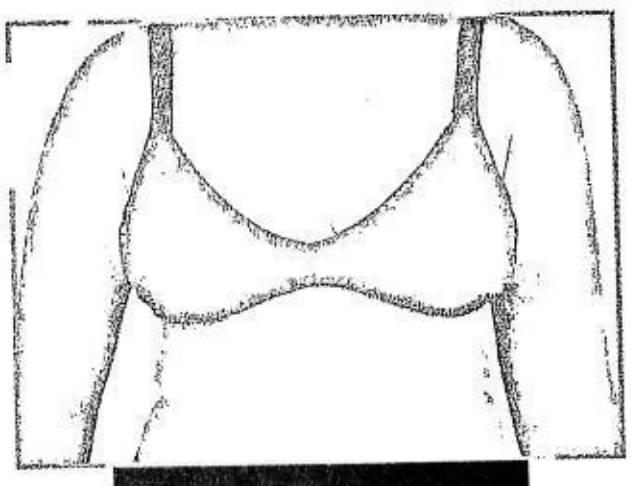

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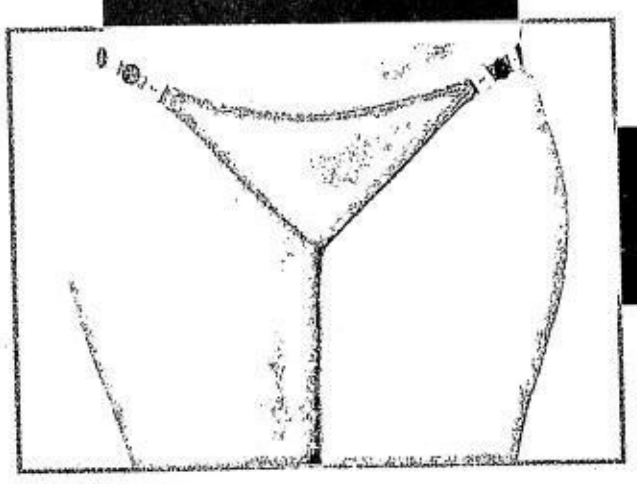

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Co siblings swap claims over Green Cross

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE FOUNDER OF GREEN CROSS Inc., Gonzalo Co, has disputed his relatives' claim that he had sold his shares in the company, claiming that his shares were transferred illegally.

Co, who claims ownership of the company which he started way back in 1952, has filed complaints of estafa and tax evasion against his siblings and their children before the National Bureau of Investigation, which then elevated the case to the Department of Justice.

He sued his relatives after he learned that his shares in the multi-million-peso company had been reduced without him signing any deeds of assignment or sale.

His relatives, who denied his allegations, said Co had "overlooked" the fact that the reason he had no more shares in the corporation was because he sold these to his family, as shown by the deeds of sale.

Their lawyer Estelito Mendoza said Co may have filed the case because the corporation grew "by leaps and bounds" after Co left it. The lawyer also said Co's siblings have continued to look after his well-being and even gave him about P70 to P80 million.

Green Cross is the manufacturer of the Green Cross alcohol brand and the Zonrox Bleach products.

Co, the eldest of five siblings, started the company in 1952 through a single proprietorship called Gonzalo Laboratories. He said he alone paid the P70,000 capital of Gonzalo Laboratories.

In 1970, the family incorporated themselves into what is now known as Green Cross.

Takeover

Co now says that he did not realize at the time that the incorporation would open his business to the eventual takeover by his siblings.

In his reply affidavit submitted to the DOJ, Co pointed out that when his mother Ang Si supposedly transferred 100 shares to his brother Peter, she only had five shares, indicating that the transfer was illegal.

In another instance, he said his brother Anthony conveyed 100 shares to Peter, while sister Mary conveyed 100 shares to Joseph. He said both actions were invalid because at that time, Anthony only had 15 shares while Mary had five.

Co also contested the relatives' assertion that his 1986 signing of a deed of absolute sale for his 874 shares in the company left him with only one share.

He said that by his reckoning, he had 3,255 shares as of Dec. 15, 1986.

"It is therefore impossible that after I 'sold' the 874 shares on Dec. 19, 1986... assuming arguendo that the sale is valid, I had only one (1) share left. As of Dec. 19, 1986, I should still have with me 2,381 shares, which corresponds to 70 percent of the paid-up capital," he said.

According to Mendoza, Co and his relatives had met before Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and had agreed to try to talk things through. The case, however, has not been withdrawn.

In counter- and rejoinder-affidavits and documents that Anthony Co, his siblings, nieces and nephews submitted to the DOJ, Co's relatives claimed that Co had signed documents that allegedly disproved his claim that he was the real owner of the shares that were registered in his mother's and siblings' names upon the company's incorporation.

They also claimed that he signed under oath documents showing that he had sold all his shares in Green Cross to his parents and siblings between 1976 and 1986, and that he had assigned the brands to the company in the early 1970s.

Paid for

Citing the company's incorporation papers, Co's relatives said that his mother and their siblings paid for their shares upon the company's incorporation and that they "at all times exercised all rights of ownership over those shares, with the knowledge and even participation of Gonzalo—receiving dividends, voting the shares, and selling the shares."

The affidavit also labeled as "untrue" Gonzalo's claim that his mother, sister and a brother could not have donated or sold 100 shares each between 1974 and 1976 because they did not own that many shares at the time.

The company's incorporation papers, signed by Co, clearly showed the mother and sister had 200 shares each, and the brother had 400 shares, in their names at the time, the affidavit said.

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	GLXi			657.00
	GLS/GSR/MX	'97-'03		
Galant	Super Saloon	'93-'03	1,025.00	625.00
	VR			865.00
Adventure	Gas	'97-'03		657.00
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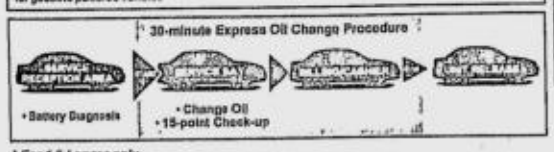

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8. Check high tension wires for damages.
9. Check clutch release cylinder for leaks and condition
10. Check suspension system for looseness and damages.
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Chongqing Week starts

THE MAYOR OF CHONGQING, CHINA, Wang Hongju, will lead a 300-member delegation to the Philippines for the "Chongqing Week" activities which will be held in Manila starting today until June 22.

Chongqing is the only directly governed city in western China. Chongqing Week includes different activities, including an Expo for Economy, Trade, Education, Culture, Gourmet and Tourism on July 19 at the Manila Hotel.

The delegation will pay a courtesy call on the leaders of the Philippine government and various departments include the Departments of Foreign Affairs; Trade and Industry; Education; Tourism; and Agriculture. They will also sign agreements with the government and business enterprises.

To enable Filipinos to discover more about Chongqing, there will be a China-Chongqing Photo Show at the Main Atrium, SM Mall of Asia from July 18-20. At the Music Hall in SM Mall and the Central University, the performance artists of Chongqing will present the award winning Youth Acrobatic Show and Szechwan Face-off Show, complemented with traditional Chinese musical instruments playing favorite Filipino and Chinese songs.

The master chef of Chongqing will display the world renowned Chongqing hotpot and banquet at the Manila Hotel. Dozens of colleges and universities in Chongqing will also answer the questions regarding study in that city during the Education Expo.

Corrections

IN THE JULY 11 ISSUE, a story on Page A6—"Rallies barred near 'summit'"—misstated Ricardo Blancaflor's position in the Department of National Defense. Blancaflor is an undersecretary—not the secretary—of the DND.

* * *

IN THE JULY 12 ISSUE, a front-page article—"Yaser Igasan identified as new Abu Sayyaf chief"—misspelled the name of the ethnic group to which Igasan belongs. The new Abu Sayyaf chief is Tausug—not Tausog.

* * *

IN THE JULY 13 ISSUE, a front-page article—"Imam killing may have triggered beheadings"—misspelled the surname of the representative of Basilan. The congressman's name is Wahab Akbar—not Akhbar.

* * *

IN THE JULY 15 ISSUE, the name of the author of the Talk of the Town article on Page A16—"FAQs on the Human Security Act"—was misspelled. The author of the article is Jose Manuel—not Manual—Diokno, chair of the Free Legal Assistance Group.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, the caption of one of the photos accompanying Tessa Prieto-Valdes' column on Page C4 of the Sunday Lifestyle section—"My first reception at the US Embassy"—misspelled the surname of the US ambassador to the Philippines. The ambassador's name is Kristie Kenney—not Kenny.

* * *

IN THE JULY 17 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"Puno: Time to use power of judiciary"—misstated the name of the Commission on Human Rights chair. The CHR chair's name is Purificacion—not Lourdes—Quisumbing.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

Oakwood mutineers' claim: If Gringo's innocent, so are we

By DJ Yap

IF GRINGO IS INNOCENT OF PLOTTING A coup d'etat, then so are we, said 13 of 31 junior officers on trial for the failed 2003 Oakwood mutiny that called for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a supplement to their motion to dismiss their coup d'etat case before a Makati court, the young officers said the facts, issues and charges in the case of Sen. Gregorio Honasan—nicknamed Gringo—were "inextricably intertwined and in fact identical" to their case.

The exoneration of Honasan, earlier tagged as the mastermind of the mutiny, was a ground for their own absolution, they argued.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez in a resolution on June 22 ordered the dropping of coup charges against Honasan, who ran and won an independent seat in the Senate in the May 14 polls. Honasan denied he made a deal with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Continued the petitioners: "It is clear that all covert acts allegedly committed by the accused during the Oakwood incident were in furtherance of Sen. Honasan's National Recovery Program." Thus, "if no criminal liability can attach to the alleged mastermind, then with more reason to his alleged cohorts or conspirators."

Lawyer Hortensio Domingo, who represents the 13 officers, filed the supplement to the demurrer to evidence before Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148.

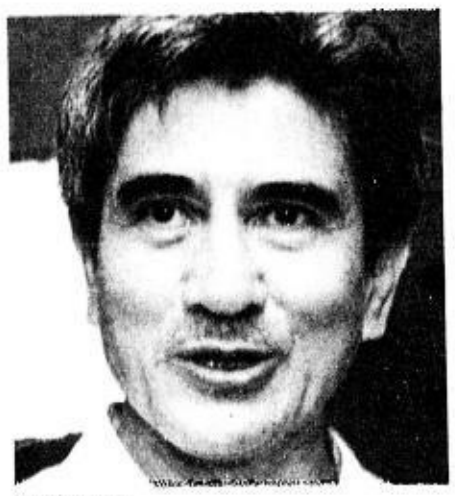
The 13 accused include Captains Gerardo Gambala and Milo Maestrecampo, two of the more prominent members of the Magdalo group.

But the other 18 accused, among them Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV who was absent at the hearing, were not included in the motion, as their lawyers said they were content with the original demurrer.

However, they posed no objection to the filing of the supplement.

Pimentel reset the trial date to Sept. 20.

The prosecution, on the other hand, said it would oppose the inclusion of the supplement.



HONASAN

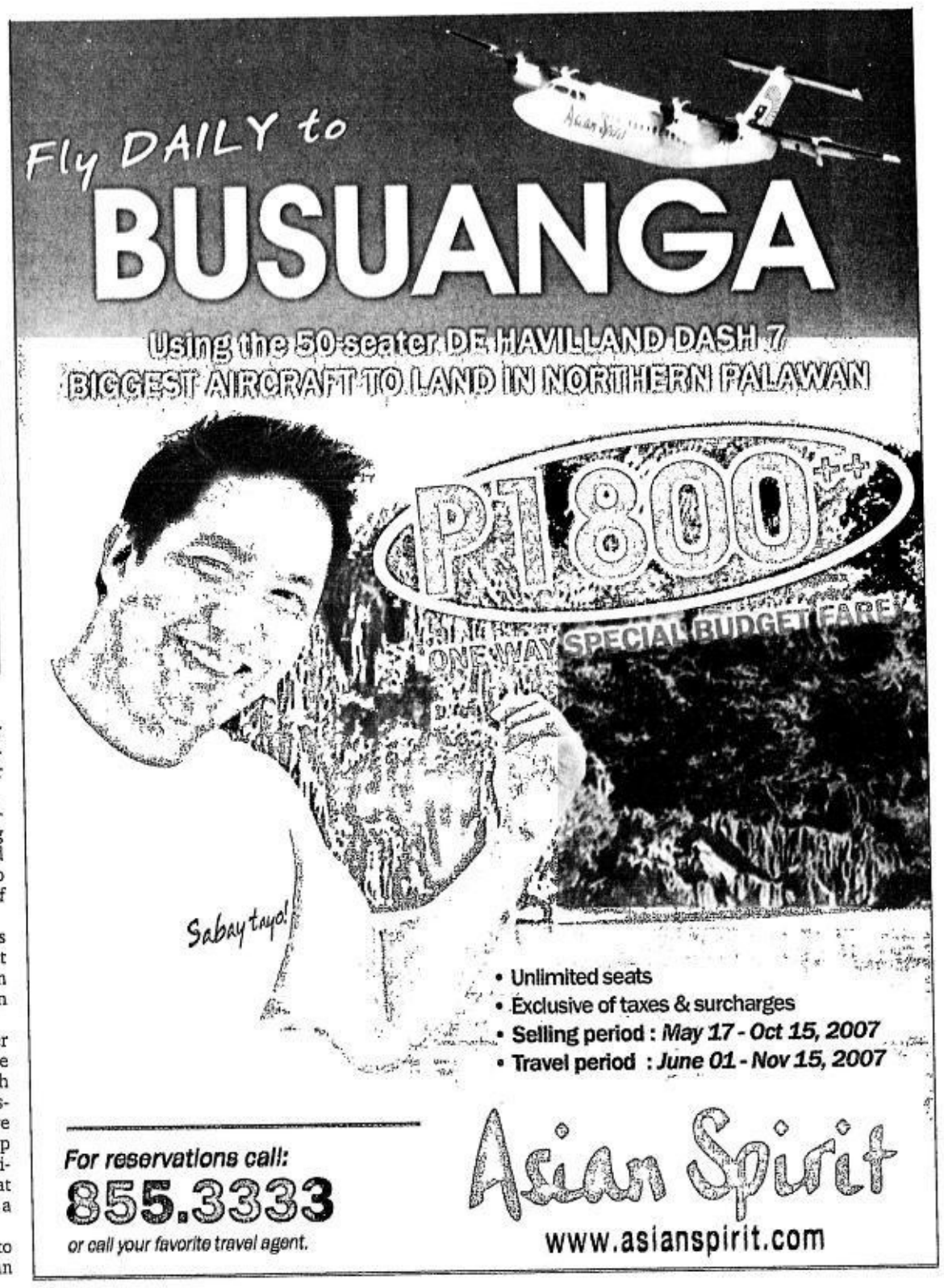
"Our position is that Honasan was not their leader. All of them were leaders," State Prosecutor Juan Pedro Navera told reporters after yesterday's hearing.

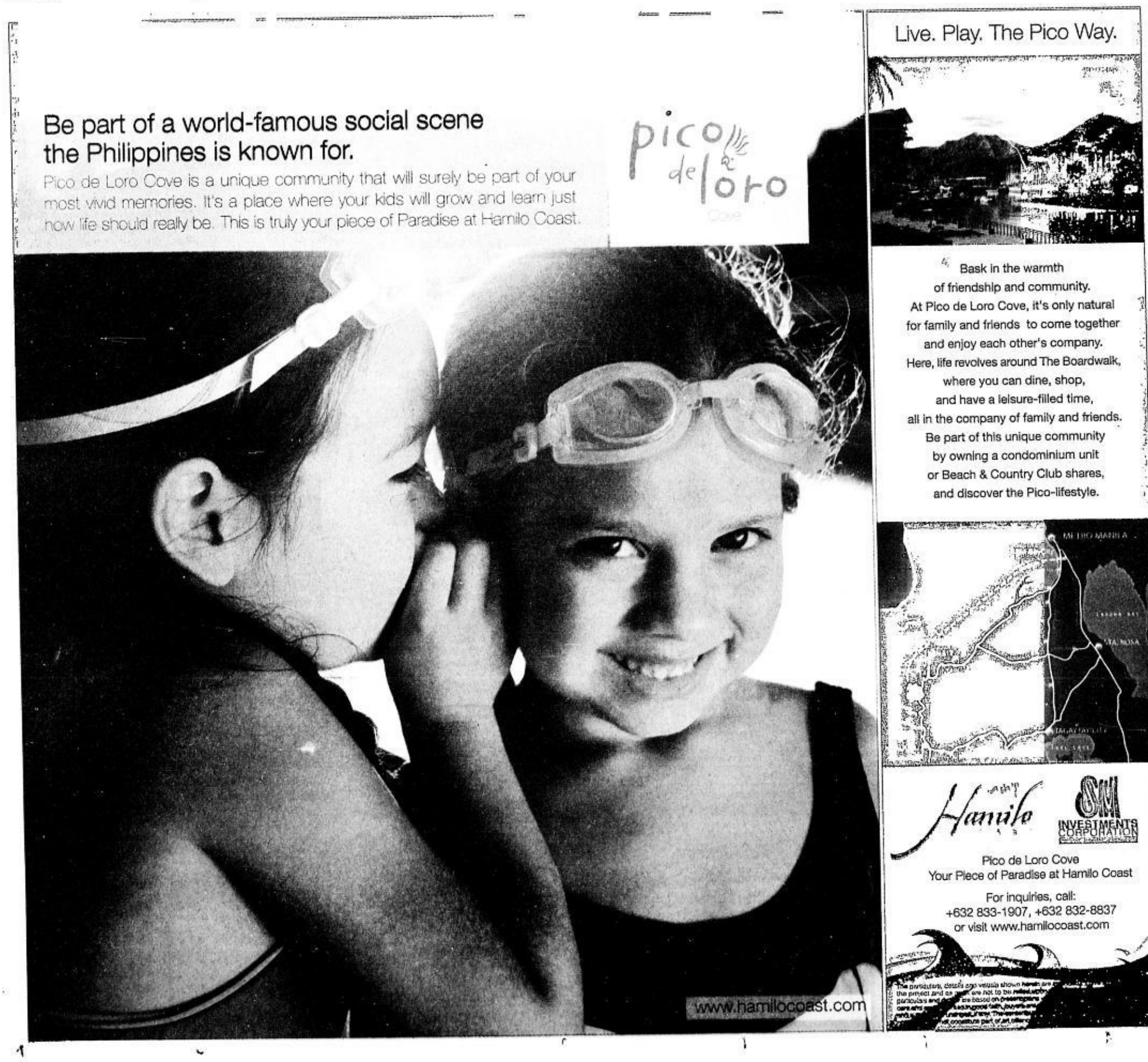
Navera further noted that it was his superior, Gonzalez, and not the panel prosecuting the Magdalo soldiers who exonerated Honasan, a former rebel officer who came to prominence during the people power revolt of 1986 that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

On July 13, Pimentel dropped the charges and lifted the hold departure order against Honasan on the basis of Gonzalez's resolution dropping the senator as one of the accused in the coup case.

Honasan was tagged as the "Kuya" (older brother, or in this case a euphemism for the leader) of the rebels who took over the posh Oakwook Premier hotel in the financial district of Makati on July 27, 2003. The move was allegedly the first step in a planned coup d'etat and people power revolt to oust President Arroyo. Intelligence reports alleged that Honasan himself was to be installed head of a junta that would take over the government.

The Oakwood mutiny, however, failed to take off. The rebel soldiers gave up after an 18-hour standoff.





Military verifies claim Abu leader wounded in Basilan clash

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE MILITARY IS NOW VERIFYing reports that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon was wounded and his son killed in the July 10 Basilan clash that killed 14 Marine soldiers and wounded nine others.

Marine spokesperson Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan said yesterday that reports about Hapilon being wounded and his son being killed were gathered by government intelligence units and volunteered by civilians in the area but these were still being validated.

Should this information be validated, this would confirm the military's claim that forces of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) attacked troops from the 1st Marine Brigade, some of whom were beheaded and mutilated.

Asked whether this would mean that the MILF fought side by side with the Abu Sayyaf as claimed earlier by the military, Caculitan said: "Well, I think the whole story points to some speculations in the same way as you may conclude but again lets not preempt the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) in the conduct of their investigation and lets see how the result would be."

Col. Ramiro Alivio, the commander of the 1st Marine Brigade based in Basilan, said the attackers of the Marine troops were believed to have dispersed to various areas in Basilan.

Alivio said the military was now trying to determine where they have fled.

He said the military has started its pursuit operations against the attackers.

Meanwhile, Caculitan denied the claim of the MILF that they had killed 23 Marine soldiers in the Basilan ambush.

"The truth is we only have 14 killed in action, although we have nine wounded although the latter are now in good condition," he told reporters.

"I think they should verify their figures and make sure the information being related to them by their forces on the ground would more or less be accurate," he added.

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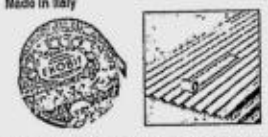

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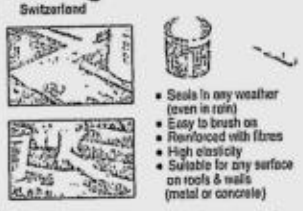

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NDF: Talks, yes; truce, no

By Christian V. Esguerra

COMMUNIST REBELS YESTERday said they were open to "exploratory talks" to restart the stalled peace talks with the government, but rejected the terms suggested by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon.

In separate statements, Luis Jalandoni, chief of the negotiating panel of the National Democratic Front, the political arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and Jose Ma. Sison, the CPP founding chair and chief NDF political consultant, shot down Esperon's proposal of a three-year ceasefire as a precondition for resuming the talks.

They said Esperon's proposal was merely "cheap propaganda," saying the plan sought to crush the communist insurgency without addressing the root causes of the 39-year-old conflict.

Esperon recommended during the Supreme Court-initiated summit on extrajudicial killings on Monday that the two sides resume peace talks, which stalled in 2004 after the communists accused the government of instigating their inclusion on the United States' and European Union list of terrorist groups.

His proposal echoed similar conditions set by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and House Speaker Jose de Venecia, which Sison called "psy-war" from top government officials.

"We get the message that the GRP [Government of the Republic of the Philippines] merely wants to destroy the revolutionary movement of the people either through military force or through the surrender and pacification of the revolutionary forces and people," he said.

Jalandoni said the exploratory talks should address a number of "prejudicial questions" that have kept the peace negotiations from moving forward.

He said the exploratory talks should "aim at coming up with a joint statement of principles taking into consideration the NDFP proposal of the concise agreement for an immediate just peace."

"This would be an important step towards accelerated negotiations on the fundamental economic, social and political reforms for the benefit of the people. Such negotiations could be attended by a ceasefire," he said.

Sison said formal talks could resume only after the government fulfilled three things: a stop to extrajudicial killings, abductions, tortures, mass displacement of people and other human rights violations; a stop to the terrorist blacklisting of the CPP, NDF and the New People's Army; and the indemnification of rights abuse victims of the Marcos regime.

Human rights groups have said the insurgency has led to a military strategy that arbitrarily attacked legitimate left-wing political groups labelled as "fronts" for the communists.

The Karapatan rights group claims to have documented more than 800 victims of summary executions (the INQUIRER puts the number at 298) since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001, many of them political activists who had been vocal against the government. *With AFP, AP*

Students to build cheap seismograph

By TJ Burgonio

SOON, STUDENTS AT 10 UNIVERsities will be developing low-cost instruments to help them monitor earthquakes and measure their intensity—formerly the realm of the country's volcanologists.

For the next three years, the students are expected to develop inexpensive digital seismographs and intensity meters, under the close supervision of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

They are also expected to install and use a Seiscomp, Internet-based software for seismic data acquisition.

Eventually, all the instruments will be integrated into the Phivolcs monitoring system around the country.

Also in the pipeline is a long-term project to install seismographs in the schools.

"In the long term we want to include these in our earthquake monitoring system. The more sensors we have, the better we can get the parameters of an earthquake for our warnings," Phivolcs director Renato Solidum said yesterday in a briefing.

Solidum signed a memorandum of agreement with Darwin Flores, senior manager of Smart Communications Partnerships, on the development project. Witnessing the event was retired Gen. Glenn Rabonza of the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

The project will be developed at the Ateneo de Davao University, Ateneo de Zamboanga University, Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro, Notre Dame University in Cotabato, Western Visayas College of Science and Technology, University of San Carlos in Cebu, Feati, Adamson University, University of Baguio and De La Salle University-Lipa.

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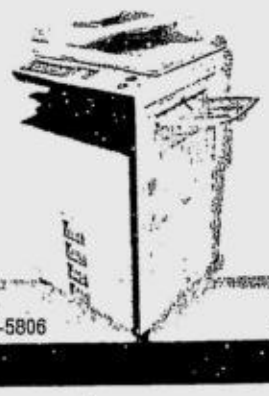

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Chinese sweets banned

THE BUREAU OF FOODS AND DRUGS HAS banned the distribution and sale of four Chinese food products, including candies and biscuits, due to concerns over food safety, officials said on Tuesday.

Leticia Barbara-Gutierrez, head of the BFD of the health department, said samples of the sweets were tested and found to contain harmful substances, such as formaldehyde.

Gutierrez issued an advisory on Monday asking the public to "refrain" from buying and consuming four Chinese-made products, including White Rabbit Creamy Candy, Milk Candy, Balron Grape Biscuits and Yong Kang Foods Grape Biscuits.

Importers and retailers were also asked to withdraw the items from the market.

Gutierrez said the health department has randomly selected Chinese food products for tests after China shut down 180 food factories found to have breached food safety regulations by mixing formaldehyde into products.

The Philippines has requested Beijing, through its embassy in Manila, to furnish the government a list of companies in China that had been shut down due to food safety concerns to protect Filipino consumers.

Revelations of tainted Chinese goods have grabbed global attention after patients in Panama died from toxic ingredients in medicine and pets died in the United States from substandard feed while tainted Chinese toothpaste was found elsewhere. *Reuters*

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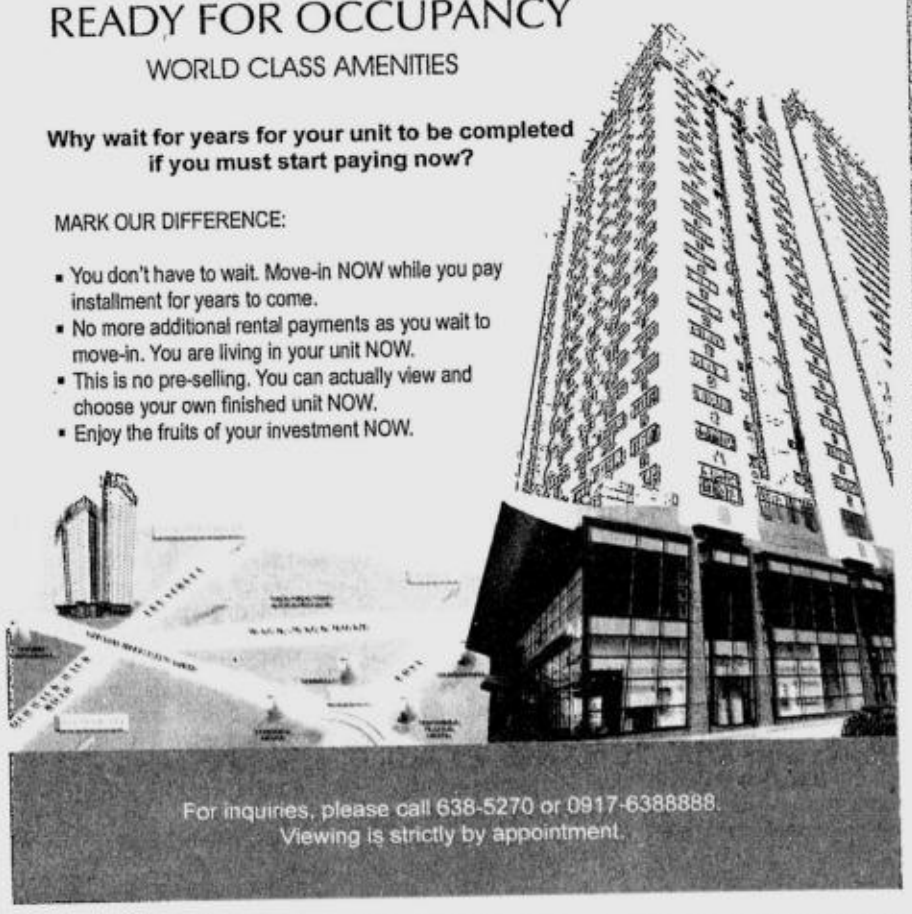

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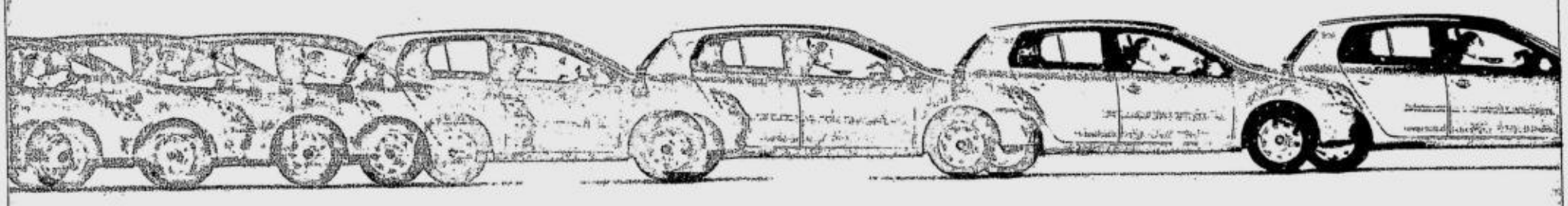

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28 more cases vs antiterror law filed at SC

From page A1

work for the immediate repeal of the HSA in the spirit of truly protecting our people from terror."

"Given the current situation where there is a fanatical persecution of individuals, organizations and institutions deemed critical of the government, unabated extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances attributed to the military, the enforcement of the antiterror law would certainly lead to state repression and provide a license for the military to crack down on legitimate activists and critics of the government," David said in a public statement titled "Defend Life and Liberty, Vanquish Terror."

In a joint petition lodged with the Supreme Court, the 28 individuals and groups sought a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the HSA while their request was being deliberated upon.

Among the petitioners were former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera, retired Col. Gerry Cunanan, film director Carlitos Siguion-Reyna, civil society leader Renato Constantino Jr. and militant groups Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Gabriela, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, League of Filipino Students, Health Alliance for Democracy and Alliance of Concerned Teachers.

The petitioners said the HSA was "a wholesale weapon for political harassment and persecution" and was in violation of the bill of rights, among other things.

The HSA defines terrorism as any of several acts punishable under the Revised Penal Code, "sowing and creating a condition of widespread and extraordinary fear and panic among the populace, in order to coerce the government to give in to an unlawful demand."

'Why are they afraid?'

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita responded to news of the petition with puzzlement.

"That's their call. Nothing would prevent them from doing that," he said. "But my question is, Why are they afraid of the law? This kind of complaint won't prevent us from implementing the law."

But Ermita said it was not for Malacañang to second-guess the tribunal's ruling on the HSA.

"Let's just await the Supreme Court decision. I don't want to [jump the gun on it]. As far as we're concerned, we're just doing what is required [in] the implementation of the law. We won't do illegal acts, and there are enough safeguards in the law."

He said the Palace would defend the HSA's legality in any forum, including the high court.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the HSA's main author in the Senate, said the lodging of the petition was a good move in that "we will know the real status of the law."

"Only the Supreme Court can determine whether a law is constitutional or not," Enrile said in an interview over dzBB radio. "If the critics have a much clearer definition [of terrorism], they should submit it. Then we will amend the law. It's as simple as that."

But he expressed confidence that the high court would uphold the HSA: "We did not violate any law. Our requirements are more stringent than those on wiretapping under other laws because our law enforcers will be jailed if they do not get prior clearance and the materials they get cannot be used in court."

'Constitutional cosmetics'

The petitioners quoted Puno's April 18 speech at the University of the East wherein he described the war on terror as "mindless" and paving the way for human rights violations:

"To put constitutional cosmetics to the military-police muscular efforts, lawmakers usually enact laws using the security of the state to justify the diminution of human rights by allowing arrests without warrants; surveillance of suspects; interception and recording of communications; seizure or freezing of bank deposits, assets and records of suspects.

"They also redefine terrorism as a crime against humanity, and the redefinition is broadly drawn to constrict and shrink further the zone of individual rights."

The petitioners said the government, including the police, the military and Malacañang, had been portraying militant groups as communist fronts or terrorists, and that by doing so, it could use the HSA against them.

"While it is true that the present government projects the [HSA] as a means to arrest, prosecute, convict and punish members of the alleged terrorist groups such as the Abu Sayyaf, the Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaida, there is an undeniable possibility and high probability that the leaders and members of activist people's organizations including progressive party-list groups, anticorruption networks and even human rights groups are likewise targets for arrest," they said.

Dismal human rights record

The petitioners said the government had rushed the passage of the HSA to quell legitimate political dissent and to remain in power.

"...[W]e sincerely believe that the [law] opens itself to be used for even more political persecution, such as what we are now experiencing under the prevailing political milieu..." they said.

They also said the provision in the HSA allowing Filipinos abroad to be penalized showed that the government wanted "to extend the repressive long arm of the law to reach migrant Filipinos and expatriates who are involved in democratic activities in other countries, and those in forced exile or asylum who exercise their constitutional rights as well as universal rights when they criticize the government and its policies."

The petitioners said the safeguards incorporated into the HSA were insufficient and "not grounded in reality."

They expressed distrust at the administration's "dismal" record on human rights, which, they said, "speaks for itself as indubitable evidence that the law can and will be used to curtail and violate the people's human rights and civil liberties and thereafter be justified with even greater impunity."

They also said the HSA was vague and broad, and that the lack of implementing rules and regulations, while not necessary, would give state agents too much leeway in enforcing it.

Yoke of oppression

Bishop David said "the heavy yoke of oppression" was again being imposed on Filipinos with the enforcement of the HSA beginning July 15.

"We believe that this antiterror law poses more frightening consequences rather than offering solutions to the situation it seeks to address," he said.

He said the Aglipayan Church also believed that the law would "only exacerbate human rights violations in the country and the incessant onslaught on civil liberties and democratic rights."

According to David, neither the government nor the military has the legal authority and moral right to suppress the people and restrain them from exercising their rights.

"To do [so] is illegal and immoral, or, more aptly, terroristic," he said. "The HSA, in essence, is a malevolent embodiment of an extremely antipeople policy that provides a tool of terror in the hands of a virtual military state."

He also said the HSA would provide the police and the military "more latitude" for surveillance, warrantless and arbitrary arrests, abductions, and illegal detention of dissenters.

Priests' killings unsolved

David recalled the unsolved killings of Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento and Fr. William Tadena, and a number of other priests who, he said, had been harassed and threatened with death.

"We fear that the worst attack on our church is yet to come with this government's antiterror law," he said.

David urged Aglipayans and other Filipinos to remain vigilant and oppose terrorism in its many guises, "and much more if it manifests in the form of state repression."

But Enrile said the HSA was "so strict."

"We resolved all doubts in favor of the security of the people," he said.

Enrile dismissed the criticisms of the law as fear of the unknown, not unlike "the giant under the balete tree."

He said its critics were more interested in getting their names in the media.

"People need not fear the law if they do not plan to commit any crime," he said.

On Monday, the Kilusang Mayo Uno, National Federation of Labor Unions-KMU, Center for Trade Union and Human Rights, Southern Hemisphere Engagement Network Inc., and lawyer Soliman Santos questioned before the Supreme Court the state definition of terrorism, among other criminal concepts contained in the HSA.

They acknowledged that there was a need for a law against terror, but warned that the HSA and its definition of terror would hinder the legitimate fight against it.

They asked the high court to annul the law and, while their petition was being studied, to issue a TRO on its implementation.

With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WOUNDED IN ACTION: Soldiers carry their wounded comrade through a stream after a steep descent in Sitio Minailo, Danicop, 3 km from Virac, Catanduanes, on Tuesday morning. Two civilians were killed in the crossfire that also led to the death of an unidentified NPA guerrilla. FERNAN GIANAN/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

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July 19 - 22	Thursday to Sunday, Megatrade Halls 1 & 2, 5th Level Bldg. B, SM Megamall	Business Development Services (BDS) Expo — *A showcase of support programs and services for small and medium enterprises from the government, private sector, and development partner organizations*
July 19 - 22	Thursday to Sunday, Seminar Rooms A and B, Megatrade Halls 1 & 2, 5th Level Bldg B. SM Megamall	Entrepreneurship Briefing Sessions* — *44 entrepreneurship briefing sessions to help develop SME capabilities and competitiveness*

Schedule of Entrepreneurship Briefing Sessions

TOPICS	DATE	TIME		VENUE
FINANCING				
How to Secure Loans from Banks from Banks (BAP)	July 19	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room A
Managing Your Finances (UP-ISSI)	July 20	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room A
No-nonsense Credit and Collection for SMEs (PCCI)	July 20	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room B
Cash Management for Small Business (SB Corp.)	July 21	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room A
Loans Available to SMEs a. SB Corporation b. Asia Trust Bank c. People's Credit and Finance Corp. (PCFC)	July 21	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room B
MARKETING				
Product Costing and Pricing (PTTC)	July 19	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room A
Business Opportunities				
Paano Maging Subcontractor (DTI-BDT)	July 19	2:45pm	3:30pm	Room B
Marketing Virgin Coconut Oil (PCCI)	July 19	3.40pm	4:30pm	Room B
Briefing on Franchising Business (GMB)	July 20	1:00pm	2:00pm	Room A
I-Café by Globe Telecom	July 20	2:30pm	3:30pm	Activity Ctr
Acquiring a Franchise from Julie's Bakeshop	July 20	2:10pm	2:30pm	Room A
How to Acquire Botika Ng Bayan Franchise	July 21	4:30pm	5:30pm	Room A
Production of Bamboo for Landscaping and as Edible Shoot (DENR)	July 22	10:30am	12:00nn	Room B
TECHNOLOGY/PRODUCTION				
Packaging and Labeling for Food and Non-Food Products (DOST)	July 19	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room A
The Benefits of Design (PDDCP)	July 19	1:00pm	2:30PM	Room B
Current Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) (DOST)	July 20	10:30am	12:00nn	Room A
Proper and Safe Usage of Additives for Food (DOST)	July 20	10:30am	12:00nn	Room B
Healthy Employees, Healthy Company	July 20	10.30am	12:30nn	Activity Ctr
How to Set-up Business Incubators (UPISSI)	July 20	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room B
Basic Orientation on Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (DOLE)	July 21	10:30am	12:00nn	Room A
Various Kinds of Bar B-Que	July 21	10:30am	12:30nn	Activity Ctr
Processing of Commercial Meat Products	July 21	3:00pm	5:00pm	Activity Ctr
Waste Management System for SMEs (PCCI)	July 22	11:20am	12:30pm	Room A
Basic Orientation on ISTIV [Industrious, Systematic, Time-Conscious, Innovative and Strong Value for work] (DOLE)	July 22	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room B
Geographic Info System (GIS) Technology- A Tool in Identifying Quality Resources for SMEs (DENR)	July 22	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room A
Use of Free Open Software Tools for Enterprise Productivity [STEP] (CITC)	July 22	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room B
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT				
Vegetarian Attractions	July 19	4:00pm	5:00pm	Activity Ctr
Demonstration on the Crafting of Wovenwire Bracelets (CITC)	July 21	10:30am	12:00nn	Room B
Opporunity for a Vegetarian Restaurant Business (VARONA)	July 22	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room A
Dimsum Processing (ULTIMA Entrepinoy)	July 22	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room B
REGULATIONS/INCENTIVES				
Trademark E-Filing Demo (IPO)	July 19	2:00pm	3:00pm	Activity Ctr.
Rural Micro Enterprise Promotion Program [RUMEPP] (DTI-OOP)	July 19	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room B
Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance and Services of the Dept. of Agriculture (DA-AMAS)	July 19	5:45pm	6:30pm	Room B
Business Advisory Program (PBSP)	July 20	4:30pm	5:15pm	Room A
Briefing on Business Support Organization Programs and Services	July 20	6:30pm	7:00pm	Room B
How to Acquire a BFAD Certificate (BFAD)	July 21	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room A
How to Register a Trade Name and Trademark (IPO)	July 21	2:45pm	4:15pm	Room B
Barangay Micro Business Enterprise Law (DTI-BSMED)	July 21	5:45pm	6:30pm	Room A
DTI Business Name Registration (DTI-NCR)	July 21	4:30pm	6:00pm	Room B
Dealing with BIR [e.g. Registration, Audit etc.] (Auditor ng Bayan accredited by BIR	July 22	2:45pm	4.15pm	Room A
OTHERS				
Innovative Packaging (PTTC)	July 20	1:00pm	2:30pm	Room B
How to be a Successful Entrepreneur (DTI-BSMED)	July 20	5:30pm	6:30pm	Room A
Importance of Booth Design Set-up (CITEM)	July 22	10 30am	11 15am	Room A

Briefing Sessions are FREE.
Please make reservations at Tel. Nos. 897.1693 and 890.4968

For more information, contact:
SMED Council Secretariat Office
Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (BSMED)
3/F Oppen Bldg., 349 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City
Telephone: 897.1693, 890.4968, and 897.7596
Facsimile: 896.7916
E-mail: bsmed@dti.gov.ph
www.dti.gov.ph

dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY

SMED COUNCIL

Anakpawis member shot ...

From page A1

Tacloban City, at around 1 a.m., according to Carl Ala of the militant peasant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

Solayao was taken by relatives and neighbors to the St. Paul Hospital, where he died at around 11 a.m.

Ala said Solayao was active in organizing and doing community work for Anakpawis in Tacloban. He was vice president of the fish vendors' group Katipunan ng mga Gudti nga Magtirinda (Kaguma), an affiliate of Anakpawis.

Visayas police said Solayao was also vice chair of Kadamay, an affiliate of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), in Metro Tacloban.

Solayao was possibly the first victim of an extrajudicial killing since the Human Security Act (HSA), otherwise known as the antiterror law, came into effect on July 15.

He was the 36th member of Anakpawis killed since 2001, according to the INQUIRER count.

Waiting for a ride

Chief Supt. Abner Cabalquinto, commander of the Eastern Visayas police, quoted investigators as saying that Solayao was waiting for a ride in front of a parking area when the motorcycle bearing two men appeared.

The rear rider dismounted and fired two shots at Solayao and another three shots as he lay on the ground, Cabalquinto said.

Per another account, Solayao and his wife were standing outside their house waiting for a ride to the seaport to buy fish when the shooting occurred.

Police investigators found five empty shells and two slugs from a .45-cal. pistol at the crime scene.

According to Teodoro Casiño of the party-list group Bayan Muna, Solayao was organizing barangay assemblies on the HSA and on urban militarization.

Casiño said Solayao was "visited" by soldiers two weeks ago and was accused of being a member of the communist New People's Army—which he vehemently denied.

He was purportedly told to stop his political activities.

"He was supposed to join me in a press conference [today] to narrate the incident," Casiño told the INQUIRER.

Mocking high court

Ala quickly blamed the military for the attack, saying its "death squads" were "mocking" the Supreme Court-led summit.

"It is really a brazen attack against militants, especially now that the summit is ongoing," he said.

Flor Acbo, spokesperson of Bayan-Eastern Visayas, said the group doubted the initial police investigation that indicated a personal grudge was behind the attack on Solayao.

Acbo said his group had been told by Solayao's fellow fish vendors that a couple of days before the shooting, two soldiers warned Solayao against continuing his organizing activities.

He condemned the shooting of Solayao and called for a thorough and impartial investigation, saying many such killings had occurred in Eastern Visayas but remained unsolved.

"This is their (the government's) way to eliminate dissenters or critics," he said.

Acbo also told the INQUIRER that Bayan was demanding the repeal of the HSA, the pullout of soldiers deployed in the northern part of Tacloban, and the construction of more stalls for poor fish vendors at the city market.

Durano hails BI policies on tattoos

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION'S ANnounced "No Touch, No Contact" and "Tattoo is an Art" policies on the treatment of tourists, particularly Japanese, have elicited appreciation from Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano.

In a statement, Durano said the BI's adoption and implementation of the policies reflected its "responsiveness to immediate concerns."

Japan is projected to account for over a million visitors, or more than 20 percent, of the Philippines' five million target arrivals by 2010. It is also the Philippines' second biggest investor and trade partner, and the largest donor of official development assistance.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan had earlier informed Durano in a letter of a memorandum order prohibiting BI officers from making physical contact with passengers or searching their hand-carried luggage unless required by special circumstances.

Searching hand-carried luggage is a domain of security officials and customs authorities, according to Libanan's order.

"Relatedly, under the 'Tattoo is an Art' policy, no passenger suspected of having a tattoo shall be made to show, display or exhibit the same unless coupled with [indications] of waywardness or derogatory information from validated sources. Thus, a mere tattoo, unless morally offensive, indecent and vulgar, or politically and racially insidious, shall be treated with artistic value," Libanan said in his letter.

The two policies stemmed from reports of harassment of Japanese tourists by immigration personnel at Philippine international airports, which prompted Durano to bring up the matter to Libanan.

The two men are former colleagues in House of Representatives.

The new BI policies came on the heels of Durano's successful 3rd Philippine Business Mission (PBM) to Japan, where he led an industry delegation to the cities of Nagoya, Osaka and Tokyo, according to Director Benito C. Bengzon Jr., head of the Department of Tourism's Team Japan.

Through the PBM, members of the local tourism industry gain bilateral government assistance in finding Japanese buyers of travel packages, investors in new projects, and partners for joint ventures or asset acquisitions, and other business linkages.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, July 18, 2007
15th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ex 3:1-6, 9-12
Gospel: Matthew 11:25-27

On one occasion Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise you, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people. Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.

"Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Commentary

Moses, a shepherd tending the sheep, sees a burning bush. The bush burns but is not consumed. As he draws closer to it, God calls out to him. God reveals himself to him, and Moses is afraid. But God tells him that he has heard the cry of the Israelites in their oppression and that it is Moses whom he is sending to lead them out. Moses is told in his insecurity and fear that God will be with him and that one day all the people will worship on this mountain. God is the God of creation and life, the God of the promises to Moses and the Israelites, the God of freedom, of pity, and human dignity. Moses is sent to set the people free.

Jesus prays to his Father and reveals that only the least, the poorest, those without power on earth (like the children during his time) are the only ones who know God's ways. Only Jesus knows our Father, and Jesus chooses to reveal him to us. All that we know of God the Father is the gracious gift of the Word, the Son. Do we pray for this knowledge and wisdom?

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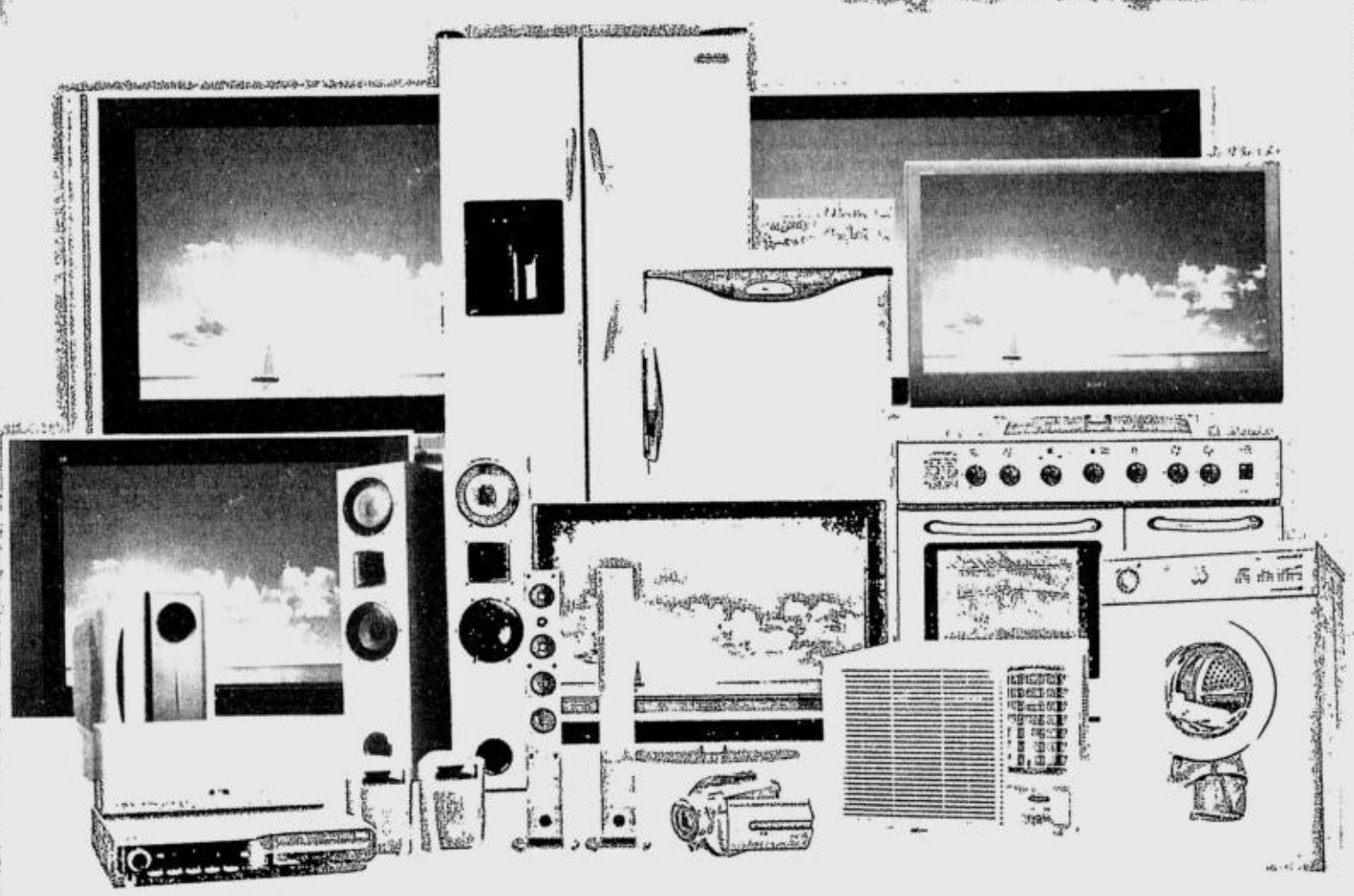

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Summit to GMA: Stop slays

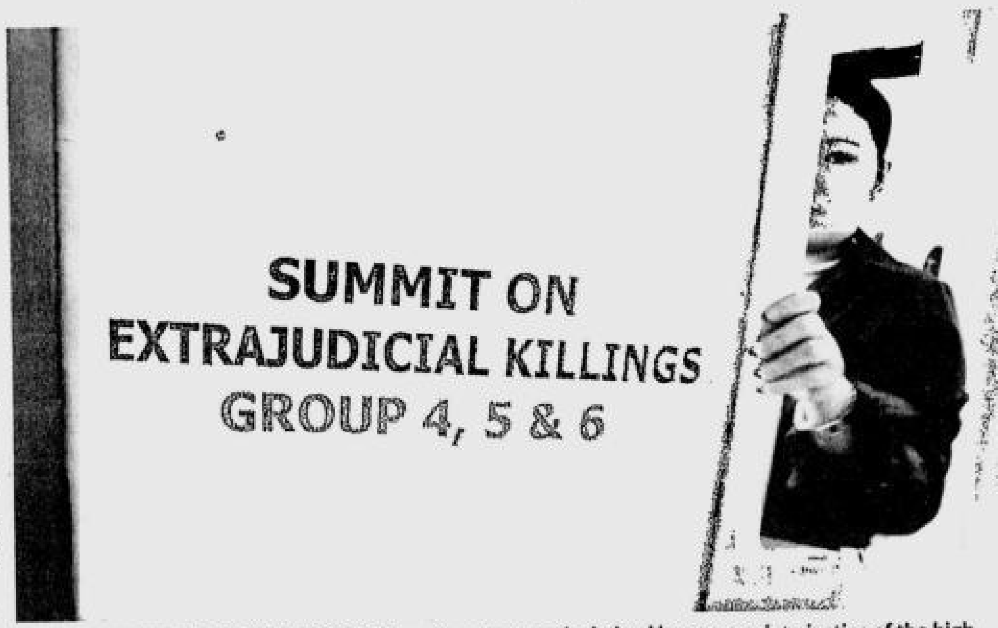
From page A1

cal," Marquez said. "All the suggestions made by the working groups will be relayed to the concerned government agencies or branch of government."

A working group chaired by Supreme Court Associate Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez called on the summit to adopt a resolution urging Ms Arroyo to order a stop to the killings and the abductions.

"(We recommend) the issuance, through this summit, of a resolution requesting the Chief Executive to issue and order all those concerned to stop the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances," the Gutierrez group said in its report.

Four members of the 13-member group "dissented" with this recommendation, the report said. All four dissenters came from the ranks of the military and Philippine National Police, it said.



UNPRECEDENTED: 12 "BREAKOUT" sessions were each chaired by an associate justice of the high court. REM ZAMORA

Command responsibility

The group also called on Congress to enact a law on command responsibility and that a study be made regarding the immunity of the government from suit in cases of extrajudicial killings and disappearances.

It also urged the adoption of "the customary international laws on command responsibility."

"A study (should) be made regarding immunity of the government from suit in cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances and determine if the government can be held liable for damages," it added.

To make cases of political killings and disappearances easier to prosecute, several groups proposed that the so-called "presumption of regularity" in the performance of duty of members of the military and police be suspended in cases of extrajudicial killings and disappearances.

Carpio group

Several working groups urged the resumption of peace talks with rebel groups to end the violence that has hit the ranks of leftist militants.

One called on leftists to renounce armed struggle.

The group of Associate Justice Antonio Carpio called for giving more teeth to the writ of habeas corpus by allowing inspections of private and public premises when the respondents deny holding in custody a person reported missing.

"In habeas corpus proceedings, the petitioner may ask the court for an order allowing petitioner to search specific private and public premises under guidelines prescribed by the court in the presence of the (Commission on Human Rights) and the police," the Carpio report said.

Quisumbing group

Groups also called for further study into the implementation of the so-called writ of amparo aimed at ensuring greater respect for civil liberties.

Members of a group headed by Senior Associate Justice Leonardo Quisumbing called for a three-year ceasefire with rebels. The Quisumbing group called for a study on the creation of a law that would define extrajudicial killings and disappearances as crimes separate from murder and kidnapping.

It proposed to define extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances as "those that are (1) done outside the law; and (2) for political and/or ideological reasons."

"That these were done pursuant to a state policy or not is irrelevant to our task of finding solutions," it added.

Crime against media

The Quisumbing group proposed looking into a new crime where the victim "is a journalist, judge, (or) militant who is killed or kidnapped in the course of the performance of his duties or the conduct of his profession."

"This is not penalized in the Revised Penal Code. If we have a law protecting the women and children, this group is also in need of the protection of the law," the Quisumbing group said.

"This is not an intrusion by the judiciary into the domain of the legislature," it added. "Under our laws, the court can propose laws for the enactment of Congress."

Various groups also urged strengthening of the government's witness protection program through increased funding and making available life insurance coverage for witnesses and sanctuaries for them.

Twelve working groups each headed by a justice of the Supreme Court drew up various recommendations.

Nachura, Tinga groups

The group led by Justice Antonio Eduardo Nachura proposed giving more prosecutorial powers to the CHR, noting that more complainants go to the commission than to the DOJ.

"The DOJ is perceived as an arm of the state. The CHR is perceived to be more trustworthy. Most of the complainants go to the CHR rather than the DOJ, but it's the DOJ that handles the prosecution," according to the group's representative, Adrian Sison.

The group led by Associate Justice Minita Chico Nazario suggested that the CHR's prosecution powers also be expanded so that a more independent body would handle cases of extrajudicial killings and disappearances.

The group chaired by Justice Dante Tinga recommended the Office of the Ombudsman as another forum where complainants could go and seek, saying that "unlike the DOJ, it is a politically independent office, independent from politics, at least in theory."

Filipino solution

The group's representative, Salvador Carlota, said it was convinced that the Philippines could best put an end to extrajudicial killings and disappearances in the long run if it relied on its domestic capability instead of on international statutes.

"This is a Filipino problem requiring a Filipino solution," Carlota said.

Other delegates also suggested studying the possibility of reimposing the death penalty.

"Recommendations to the executive will be sent to Malacañang while those calling for legislative attention will be sent to Congress," Marquez said.

THE BALL IS IN GMA'S COURT: The resolution at the end of the extrajudicial summit is for President Arroyo to issue an order to all those concerned to stop the killings and enforced disappearances. LYN RILLON

Marine soldier accidentally fires gun at summit venue

By Tina G. Santos

TENSION YESTERDAY gripped the Manila Hotel, where an unprecedented summit on extrajudicial killings was being held, when a Marine soldier accidentally fired his gun.

Sgt. Melchor Dedulo, of the Civil Relations Service of the Philippine Marines, accidentally pulled the trigger of his .45 caliber gun as he was about to deposit it at the hotel's security desk.

"He was about to enter the hotel so he cocked the gun to unload the bullets, but it accidentally went off," said Jimmy Papio, the hotel's security supervisor.

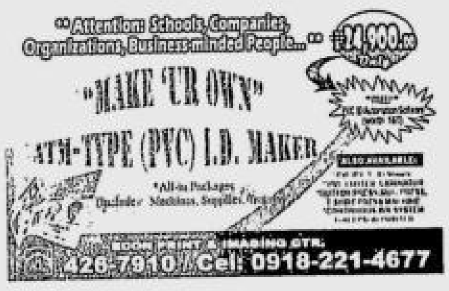
Papio said no one was hurt during the incident that happened around 1:50 p.m.

"He cocked it downward, facing a box of sand where guns were usually unloaded," Papio said.

Negligence

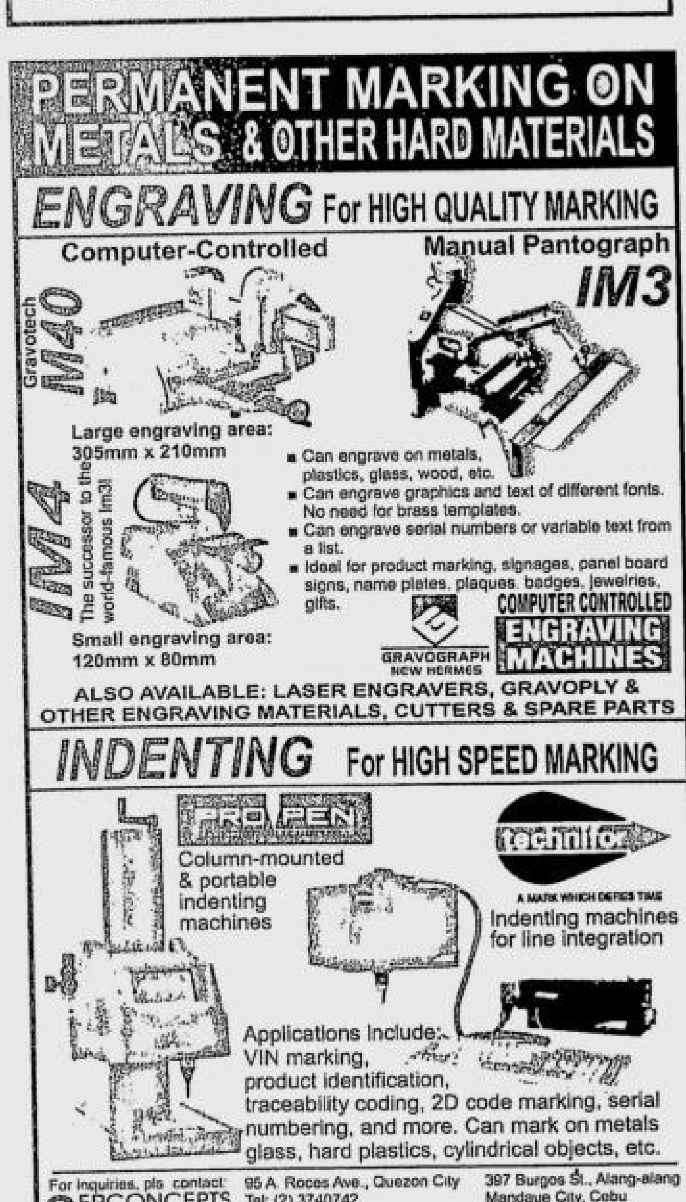
Dedulo, who immediately surrendered his gun to his superior, was brought to the police for investigation.

A police official, who refused to be identified because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said that although Dedulo had no criminal liability, he might face administrative charges for negligence.



NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Auction Sale of The Bureau of Customs Port of Subic for Motor Vehicles and other items scheduled for July 18, 2007 has been moved and set on July 20, 2007 at 2 P.M. Conference Room office of the District Collector.



Puno lost judge-brother to assassin

From page A1

true, he said, "but in real democracies, the objective is to reduce that distance."

"For the fullness of freedom can only be attained when there is no more hunter, no more hunted," he said.

Nobody on record asked Puno to call for the forum. As far as his chief of staff, Jose Midas Marquez, knows, "CJ" first floated the idea of "expanding the court's role" against the killings not in a conference with fellow justices, but in an interview with the INQUIRER's Hong Kong correspondent Philip Tubeza.

(Puno attended the 12th Conference of Chief Justices of Asia and the Pacific in Hong Kong last month. The Hong Kong Campaign for the Advancement of Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines met with Puno to thank him and the high court for its recent decisions upholding civil liberties.)

For a longtime colleague, expanding the court's role against the killings was consistent with Puno's character.

"I'm not surprised. He's always been a risk-taker," said Ismael Khan Jr., former Supreme Court spokesperson, who knew Puno since their school days at the University of the Philippines College of Law.

Collegian editor

As an editor of the UP's Philippine Collegian in the 1960s, the "liberal" thinking Puno had had "disagreements a number of times" with university authorities over what he got printed in the school paper, Khan fondly recalled.

"He's a deep thinker, reserved in many ways, yet acts fast; people wouldn't know what's going on in his mind," Khan said of his fraternity brother in Alpha Phi Beta.

With three masters degrees and a career in law spanning four decades, Puno is the "intense" intellectual who keeps his desk uncluttered and can talk about Socrates over coffee, said Marquez, who authored a book compiling landmark Supreme Court decisions and opinions penned by then Senior Associate Justice Puno.

(Marquez' book was published in 2005, two years before Puno's appointment as Chief Justice.)

Widower, lay preacher

The Chief Justice, a member of the UP College of Law Class '62, reports to the office as early as 6 a.m., according to Marquez. Once, in a media interview, he recalled, Puno said he would start his day at 4 a.m., leafing through the Bible and listening to religious hymns.

A 67-year-old widower, Puno is also a lay preacher in the Methodist Church. His wife was a former clerk of court of the tribunal, Luzviminda Delgado.

In his government career, Puno's integrity can be considered "beyond reproach," Khan said.

This can probably explain why, as winners began to emerge in the May 14 midterm elections, "everybody's lining up to be sworn in by him."

Bee line for oath-taking

Marquez said among those who asked Puno to administer their oath of office were Senators Francisco "Kiko" Pangilinan, Francis "Chiz" Escudero and Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, Batangas Gov. Vilma Santos, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Caloocan Mayor Recom Echiverri, Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando, and militant party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo of Bayan Muna, Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis and Lisa Maza of Gabriela,

Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, a Catholic priest, also wanted his oath taken before Puno, but the rites didn't push through due to conflicts in the schedule, the INQUIRER learned.

High degree of credibility

These personalities apparently gravitated to the otherwise low-profile Puno because "he enjoys a high degree of credibility and has managed not to be identified with any political (camp)," Khan said.

Puno's pull went into greater display at the two-day summit, which drew some 250 delegates and observers, including 28 foreign diplomats and development officers.

What most of the participants probably didn't know, however, was that Puno himself had experienced the pain of losing a loved one in a political murder.

One high noon on April 16, 1977, Puno's eldest brother, Isaac Puno Jr., then a Manila Court of First Instance judge, was shot dead at close range in the presence of his family inside a restaurant in Manila.

The older Puno was slain while still mourning the passing of his infant daughter who died of a congenital illness.

A gunman from the New People's Army, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), was arrested for the murder.

The gunman and three of his accomplices were convicted of murder. But nine years after the murder, the amnesty program of the Aquino administration freed jailed communist dissidents led by Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the CPP.

Writer Gregorio Brillantes, in an article he wrote on Puno, captured this episode: "The assassination of Filipinos by their own countrymen is far from an impersonal, abstract subject as far as Justice Puno is concerned."

Greater good

In the Brillantes article, Puno conceded that his family was very unhappy to see the killers of his brother released, allowed to go scot-free. "But what could we do?" he asked.

"The government and leadership had made the decision, that granting them amnesty was for the greater good of our people, our country," Puno was quoted as saying.

Brillantes mused: "What the heart sometimes protests, the intellect and will must accept for the greater good, if so decided by a legal, duly constituted government—a principle and conviction Justice Puno has made his own, at no little cost in blood and tears."

Share bountiful harvest

In his closing remarks at the summit, Puno reminded anyone that while the judiciary was taking the initiative, it was the government—all its three branches—that will share the "bountiful harvest of recommendations" coming from the delegates.

The inputs, he said, would be forwarded to Malacañang "for appropriate action" and the two chambers of Congress "for the enactment of appropriate laws."

But initially, a committee under the Supreme Court will go over the recommendations for possible "revision of the Rules of Court," he said.

Jinggoy wants Senate to probe Jonas abduction

AN OPPOSITION senator has called for a Senate investigation into the abduction of activist Jonas Joseph Burgos.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada has readied a Senate resolution calling for an inquiry in aid of legislation not only into Burgos' case but the growing number of cases of involuntary disappearances of activists under the Arroyo administration.

Burgos, 37, son of the late press freedom fighter Jose Burgos Jr., was abducted by armed men inside the Ever Gotesco shopping mall in Quezon City last April 28.

The abductors forcibly took Burgos to a waiting car whose plate numbers were later traced to another vehicle parked inside an Army camp in Bulacan. Burgos has since remained missing.

Estrada said he would ask the Senate committees on human rights and national defense to "dig deeper" into the alleged involvement of military personnel in Burgos' disappearance.

The Department of Justice recently tried to investigate the case.

But Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco was taken off the case by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez after Velasco revealed the involvement of agents of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) in the abduction and summoned the Isafp to produce the suspects.

Velasco said witnesses implicated four Isafp agents M/Sgt. Aaron Arroyo, T/Sgt. Jason Roxas, Corporal Maria Joanna Francisco and a certain TL, as well as Lt. Col. Noel Clement and 1Lt. Jaime Mendaros of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion based in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

Estrada will file the resolution when the 14th Congress formally opens on July 23.

Under the new rules, the Senate would only start accepting proposed resolutions on July 23.

Estrada wants ranking military officers to be summoned during the Senate public hearings.

He also wants top administration officials led by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita summoned to explain why Malacañang has not signed and endorsed to the Senate the United Nations' International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.

BURGOS

Estrada's resolution also calls on the Senate to prioritize bills penalizing acts of torture and involuntary disappearances of persons in custody.

Estrada has also refiled a bill that seeks to create a Philippine Commission on Missing Persons.

On Monday, the Supreme Court sponsored a top level summit on extrajudicial killings of activists and journalists. The killings have been roundly condemned by the international community, the Church and civil society groups. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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Mutya ng Pasig	Karne: - Pork Carcass (head)	15-20 heads 15-20 heads 10-15 heads	Kiko & Alice Reynoso Roberto "Boy Aga" Reynoso Tom Martinez
	Dressed Chiken	1,500-2,000 kilos	Edna de Jesus
	Isda: - Bangus - Tilapia	3,000 kilos 3,000 kilos	Flora & Mercy Flora & Mercy
	Prutas: - Indian Mango, Lanzones, Dalandan, Rambutan	1,500 to 5,000 kilos seasonal fruits/trip	Estelita Torrecampo
	Gulay (Highland) - Cabbage, Carrots, Potato, Baguio beans, Chayote, w/ onions and tomatoes	15-16 tons	Freddie & Gina Adarlo Sonny Candelaria Agapito Pastrana
	Gulay (Lowland) - Ampalaya, Eggplant, Pechay Tagalog - Sitao, Squash, Onion, etc. - Onion	4-5 tons 2 tons	Amor & Allan de Guzman Marcelino Villegas
Muntinlupa City Public Market (MCPM)	Gulay - Assorted Lowland and Highland Veggies - Karne: Pork Carcass (heads) - Chicken Dressed	2,910 kilos 11,520 kilos per day 2,096 kilos per day	Ms. Eva Orpiana Ms. Baby Teves Ms. Baby Diaz
	Gulay (Lowland)	3,180 kilos	Ms. Flora Fernandez
	Gulay (Highland)	430 kilos	Mr. Cesar Espeleta

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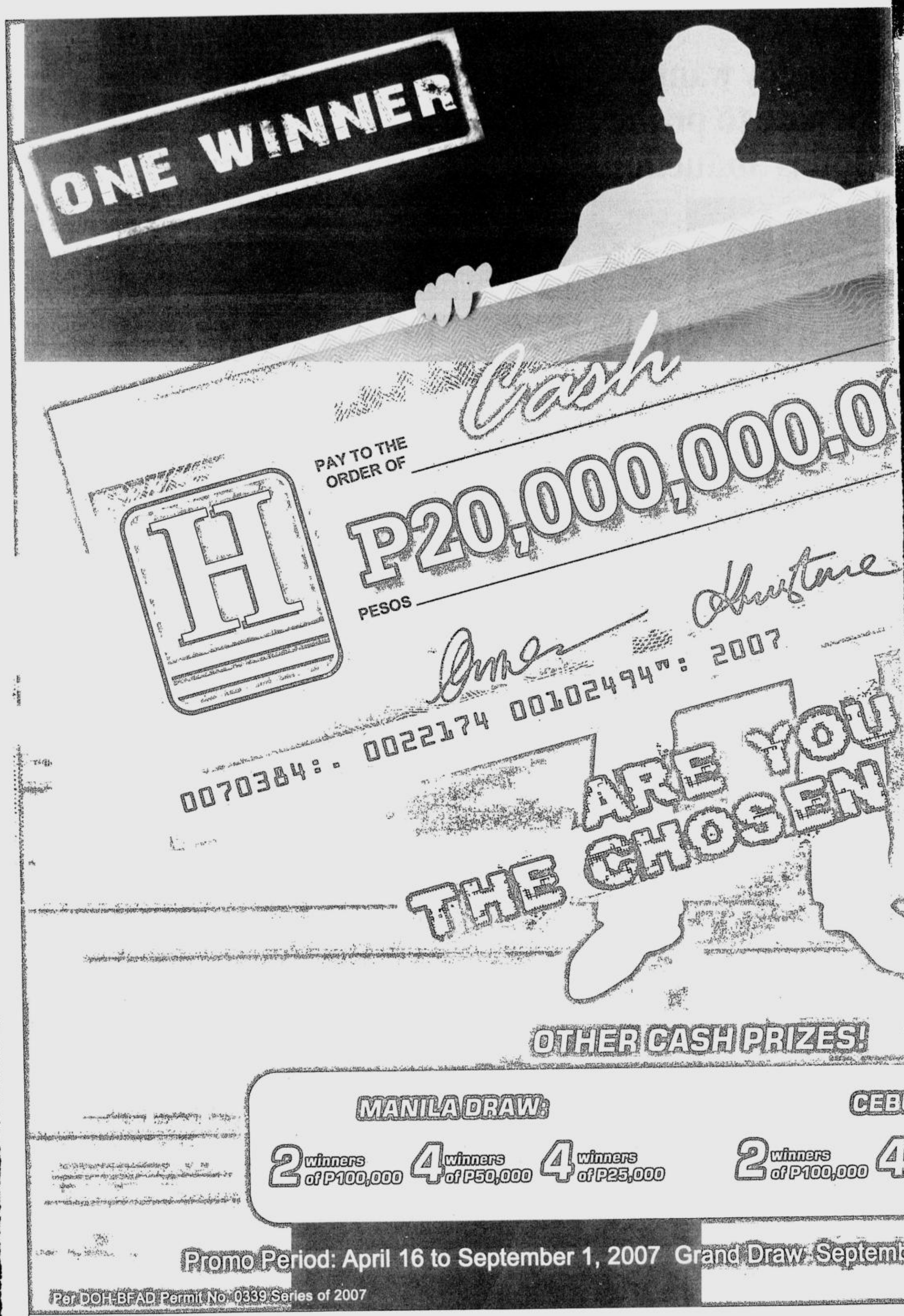

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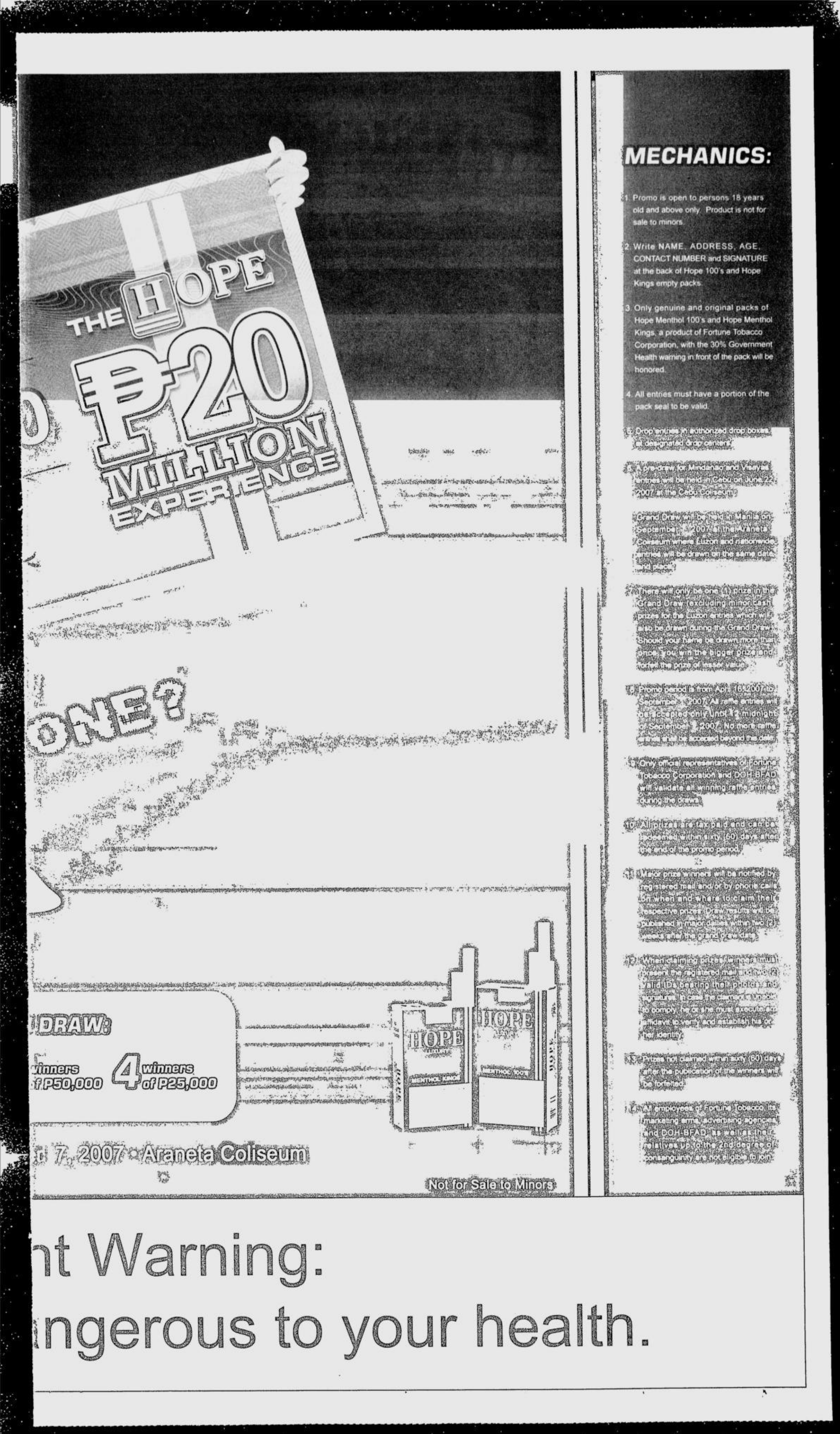
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OPINION

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Definition needed

EDITORIAL

IF THE HUMAN SECURITY ACT IS BEING HEATEDLY debated because its definition of terrorism remains overly broad and vague in the opinion of its many critics, a definition is required of what "command responsibility" actually is. The Supreme Court-initiated summit on extrajudicial killings presents an opportunity to arrive at a working definition, and the opportunity to do so shouldn't be missed.

So far, newspaper headlines have focused on Chief Justice Reynato Puno's lecturing elected officials, and on the posturing by the military top brass and the political front-men of the Left. Everyone is wringing his hands over extrajudicial killings, whether sincerely or not. But we submit that one of the major reasons things are still at the hand-wringing stage, and won't move beyond that, is that a common definition of command responsibility still doesn't exist.

In Nuremberg, the principle of command responsibility was enshrined for all time in international law, with the trial of the leadership of the Nazi state. We forget that in Asia, the same principles were upheld by the war crimes trials held in Manila, also held at the end of World War II. Command responsibility, since then, has been further developed as a legal concept in many jurisdictions, including our own. It is not only being continuously refined, but also, expanded.

The concept is most fully developed in military terms. Whether it was Allied victors insisting that Axis officers couldn't evade responsibility for war crimes by blaming it on orders from their superiors, or Western military and civilian courts insisting on the same standard for their own military (as American courts did in the wake of the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War), no officer in our day and age should be able to evade accountability by passing the blame to superiors or subordinates.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has had to admit that command responsibility is a principle our military is duty-bound to accept, and thus uphold. The Arroyo administration's civilian spokesmen have said so, too. And lawyers can point to jurisprudence in this regard. The question, however, remains how it is to be enforced, and to what extent it binds officialdom, military or civilian. This determines the kind of accountability aggrieved or concerned parties can demand and expect.

The president of the Philippines, for example, is commander in chief of the armed forces. This additional title is not decorative, and the purposes of this constitutional delineation aren't cosmetic. As the constitutionally ordained commander in chief, civilian control over the military is underlined, but we need a working agreement as to the extent to which our presidents can be held accountable for military behavior.

A working definition will also put local, and not just national, civilian officials on notice. A summit seems a waste of time if it has no impact on officials who are proving increasingly impervious to national concerns or principles. Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has put together an "Anti-Hoodlum Unit," which he has encouraged to use shotguns (though he draws the line at M-16s). Calls made by INQUIRER columnist Juan Mercado for Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña to be held accountable for the rash of liquidations has fallen on deaf ears. Government officials must be called to account for their acts—and it begins with their being clearly held responsible for extrajudicial murders in their jurisdictions.

A definition, too, is necessary when it comes to those who refuse to acknowledge the authority of our laws and courts. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has pointed out that the New People's Army has committed human rights abuses, too. So, even as we ask the civilian and armed authorities to define and adhere to command responsibility, what will be the equivalent commitment for the Left?

Command responsibility has to be more fully integrated into our justice and political systems. The process must begin with a definition that all parties can agree upon—one that can then be adopted in legislation that is in harmony with existing laws, and which bears in mind developments in international law. Only then will we see an end to officials, generals and rebels hiding behind due process to avoid command responsibility.

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Why prices are high in RP

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHY ARE PRICES OF COMMODITIES IN THE Philippines so high, higher, in fact, than prices in our more affluent neighbors? The reason is the existence of monopolies, where one company controls the domestic market and dictates the prices of certain goods. Or oligopolies, where a number of corporations in the same industry connive with one another to control the market and fix prices among themselves.

Example: Prices of medicines in the Philippines are high because foreign pharmaceutical companies have banded together to form an oligopoly and fix prices in the domestic market.

Example: The price of cement is rising despite a glut because the cement companies are owned by an oligopoly of giant foreign-owned corporations which lobby the government to impose high tariff on low-priced imported cement.

Example: Prices of petroleum products are high because the market is controlled by foreign-owned oil companies which agree on the prices of their products. Congress tried to break the monopoly by passing a law decontrolling the downstream oil industry and allowing more players to come in so that free-market competition will force prices down. But while other countries which decontrolled their downstream oil industries allowed an indefinite transition period to give new players time to be able to compete, Congress gave a six-month transition period, which then President Fidel Ramos made worse by shortening further to one month.

So, what happened? While there are a number of new players, they are so puny in comparison to the Big 3 that they cannot compete, making decontrol a farce. That is why every now and then all the oil companies raise their prices almost at the same time and at the same rates.

Example: Our electric rates are among the highest in Asia (next only to Japan's) because of monopolies: National Power Corp. (Napocor) for power generation, and Meralco for power distribution in Metro Manila and environs. Congress tried to break the monopolies by passing the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) which divided the power industry into three sectors: generation, transmission and distribution. It also provided for the privatization of Napocor and its power plants, and created the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM). WESM serves as a "pool" where all electricity outputs from power plants are centrally coordinated. Power generators and buyers of bulk electricity compete for a share of this pool to be dispatched and scheduled to meet electricity demand in real time. WESM is designed to encourage competition in generation. With competition, efficiency is expected in the short and long terms. In the short term, efficiency will result from pressures on electricity businesses to reduce costs, align prices and tariffs with costs, and use assets more efficiently. In the long term, as new competitors emerge in wholesale power generation, efficiency gains are likely to be more substantial.

But what happened? Power rates are still rising because there is no competition. The industry is still controlled by Napocor. How can there be competition in WESM when Napocor still controls and operates 70 percent to 80 percent of power plants? Because of its monopoly, Napocor can manipulate prices in WESM.

Napocor has four trading companies primarily created to sell its energy in the spot market. With Napocor providing the largest chunk of the market, the four trading companies are easily manipulated by Napocor. It can easily lower its prices below the actual rate set in the WESM market because it is subsidized by the government. But any subsidy means additional burden to the Filipinos. This is because all subsidies in the books of Napocor are considered losses. And all losses are the Filipino people's liability.

The recent sudden spikes of energy prices prompted WESM to investigate signs of price manipulation. In the first trading month, biddings resulted in an average price of P2.72 per kWh. In the second month it rose again, and now in the third month, it is P4.853 per kWh which is unreasonably high.

The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) also took notice of the price manipulation and started an investigation. Last week, ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano said it is Napocor that has the capacity to fix prices. He found the smoking gun in two letters sent by Napocor to PSALM which said that WESM-related losses incurred by Napocor (P1 billion) were a result of the strategies of PSALM's trading teams in the spot market. The letters recommended that PSALM adopt certain strategies in submitting its bids.

"It is highly inappropriate for Napocor to write such letters to PSALM," said the ERC. "The participants in the market are expected to act judiciously and be circumspect in their dealings with each other to thwart any notion of collusion or any tacit agreement or understanding among them...

"Napocor's proposal may in fact be taken as an invitation to collaborate so as to vary market results, and it is no secret that the dominant position of PSALM can enable it to capitalize on such to easily dictate prices in the WESM. The influencing capacity of Napocor over PSALM and the bidding behavior of the trading teams, whether intended or not, cannot be discounted."

If we want to make WESM work, we should start with the main provision of Epira, which calls for the privatization of Napocor and its power plants. But Napocor is resisting privatization because it is benefiting from the price manipulation. And this is what is turning off prospective investors in the energy sector. Why would anyone want to compete in an industry dominated by a subsidized government monopoly that can manipulate even the energy spot market?

She won't go

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER AGAIN SOMETHING JOVITO Salonga told me. In 1972, when he heard Ferdinand Marcos say he was declaring martial law to quell the tide of anarchy and unrest that was sweeping across the country, Salonga was terrified. Even if Marcos wasn't entirely responsible for the tide of anarchy and terror, he was the last person to quell it. He wasn't the cure, he was the problem. If he disappeared, the tide of anarchy and unrest would disappear.

But still quelling anarchy and unrest was a temporary thing. A state of emergency to respond to them had a shelf life, or a timetable. Came now the thing that chilled Salonga to the bone. Marcos had a second reason for declaring martial law: He was going to reform society. He was going to root out the "oligarchic system," one that allowed the few to grind the many under their heels. And one that bred the politics of patronage like cock fighters bred cocks.

Salonga thought: Quelling anarchy and unrest, that could take anywhere from a few months to a few years. But reforming Philippine society, that could take forever. Marcos meant to stay forever.

Don't look now, but GMA is invoking those two same things today.

At least during Marcos' time, the rebelliousness and dissent, if not the anarchy and unrest, were real. They were not manufactured. The CPP-NPA was gaining adherents by the day and activism was spreading like wildfire in the campuses. And public protest against Marcos was rising, reaching untold heights in the administration's electoral debacle in 1971, following the Plaza Miranda bombing. It wasn't just the activists who were protesting, it was also the civil rights lawyers, the academic community, business and the various groups and sectors that would later—much, much later—constitute People Power. Marcos would refer to them as the "Left-Right conspiracy."

There is little of that today, which makes the ruse of quelling the tide of anarchy and unrest to justify a martial-law environment—that is what that idiotically called Human Security Act is—infinitely more flimsy. The Left is nowhere near what it was even before martial law, when it was still a fledgling and nascent thing. At least then it could count on more—indeed an entire tribe of—recruits, given its capacity to stoke the idealism of the youth quite apart from the desperation of the hungry. Which it did. Today, that cause is largely spent, its most crushing defeats coming not in the field of battle but in the field of ideas. Its capacity to draw the youth in particular like moth to flame by the power of its convictions is no longer there, not after the fall of the Wall. Internet porno has a much stronger appeal. What keeps it alive is that its recruits, conscripted from the hungry and despairing, barely do. Better to die like men than like dogs.

Neither is there the dissent and tumult that characterized the pre-martial law period or indeed the one that brought the Erap regime down and brought a worse tyranny in its place. As everyone has been complaining, this country has become cynical and apathetic, its citizens preferring to dream of life abroad, where they can be lied to, cheated off their wages and stolen from by their employers than do something about the lying, cheating and stealing of their rulers. A citizenry that can't rise to protest the in-your-face thrusting of the middle finger into their faces in the form of Miguel Zubiri as senator is not a threat to anyone. It is a threat only to itself.

As to the Abu Sayyaf and the usual suspects, well, they are not exactly overrunning, or threatening to overrun, Muslim Mindanao, not to speak of the capital or heaven forbid the entire country.

So what is "Quelling Anarchy and Unrest Part II" all about? Nothing more or less than to keep GMA in power.

That is all it does, and that is all it is meant to do. The only terrorist threat it meets is the threat to GMA's longevity, political and physical, which is filling her and her cabal with absolute terror. Relying on a protégé to keep them from prosecution and jail for their many crimes against the people—no, against humanity, chief of them the massacre of journalists and political activists—isn't ironclad. And in any case, who says their protégé won't lie through his or her teeth as well, promising the moon and stars to get to power, and screwing them afterward? It's an irony that cannot possibly be lost on GMA.

The HSA answers that threat—to them, not to the country. The manufactured anarchy and unrest justify the fascistic response, and the fascistic response removes all obstacles to indefinite rule. Juan Ponce Enrile should know: he was there when Marcos unleashed it.

As with martial law, there is a carrot to go with the stick. Marcos promised to end the reign of the politics of patronage, GMA promises to end the reign of the politics of patronage. That was the theme of her Sona a couple of years ago, the completely bizarre or surreal suggestion being that if she stole the vote, blame it on the perverse politics of this country. Marcos promised to reform society, ending the reign of the oligarchy and ushering peace and prosperity. GMA promises to reform society, ending the reign of corruption and ushering economic recovery and prosperity. The last was the campaign theme of Team Unity: The economy is improving, we need to stay the course. We need to keep Gloria.

Quelling anarchy and reforming society—we heard these before with disastrous consequences. We hear them again with equally disastrous consequences. Never has Santayana's warning rung truer and scarier: Those who do not read history are doomed to repeat it.

Mark my words: She won't go.

A clash of doctrines

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE SUPREME COURT-INITIATED SUMMIT TO protect human rights in the wake of extrajudicial killings started at the Manila Hotel on Monday, the day after the 2007 Human Security Act, designed to combat terrorists, went into effect. No two measures could have been more antagonistic in their purposes and philosophies. The summit seeks to enhance the right to life of political activists against arbitrary killings, while the antiterrorist act tends to curtail a number of political rights in the guise of making the state and citizens safe from terrorist attacks.

The two events highlighted the clash between the political departments of government and the Supreme Court, which has decided to assert vigorously its expanded powers on behalf of human liberties to curb the abuses of the political departments. The launching of the antiterrorist legislation on Sunday marked the testing ground of the clash of these antagonistic doctrines.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno set the tone of the emerging activism of the Supreme Court on behalf of liberty in a keynote speech, when he said: "By calling this summit, we are affirming our belief in human rights not only in the abstract; we are affirming that before the universal altar of human rights there can be no atheism, nor agnosticism on our part."

Puno emphasized that the 1987 Constitution is the most pro-human rights of our fundamental laws, crafted as it was as "a robust, reactive document to the trivialization of human rights during the authoritarian years, 1972 to 1986." This expanded libertarian nature of the Constitution prompted the Court to reexamine the balance of power among the three departments.

In the course of this reexamination, Puno said, under the pre-1987 Constitution, the executive, through "the adept deployment of the commander in chief powers, can run roughshod over our human rights."

In a potshot at the legislature, Puno said "a supine legislature can betray the human rights of the people by defaulting to enact appropriate laws, for there is nothing you can do when Congress exercises its power to be powerless."

Puno might as well have been referring to the enactment of the Human Security Act that has already alarmed civil libertarians for being riddled with restrictions on political rights.

"It is for this reason and more," Puno said, "that our constitutional commissioners deemed it wise to strengthen the powers of the judiciary, to give it more muscular strength in dealing with non-use, misuse and abuse of authority in government." He cited two new prominent powers given to the judiciary: the judicial power was expanded to include the duty of the courts of justice to settle actual controversies involving rights which are legally demandable and enforceable and to determine whether or not there has been grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part of any branch of government.

In the landmark case of Tolentino v. Secretary of Finance, Puno said that in imposing on the Court the duty to annul acts of government committed with grave abuse of discretion, the new Constitution "transformed the Court from passivity to activism."

Under the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions, Puno said, the Court approached constitutional violations "not by finding out what it should not do but what it must do. The Court must discharge its solemn duty by not resuscitating a past that petrifies the present."

He pointed out that the 1987 Constitution expanded the rule-making prerogative of the judiciary. This power is stated in Article VIII, Section 5 (5) which empowers the Supreme Court to promulgate the rules concerning "the protection and enforcement of rights." For this reason, he said, the Court convened the multisectoral summit on extrajudicial killings to search for solutions and gather inputs on how the judiciary could fully utilize its expanded powers "as guardian and protector of constitutional rights."

Two decades after the promulgation of the 1987 Constitution, he said, "we would be bedeviled by extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances that exposed the frailties of our freedom, the inadequacy of our laws if not inutility of our system of justice." Given these vulnerabilities, he said, the judiciary "has decided to unsheathe its unused power to enact rules to protect the constitutional rights of our people, the first and foremost of which is the right to life itself."

In giving flesh to this mandate, Puno said in an interview with editors and reporters of the INQUIRER, that in order to strengthen the rule of law, he initiated the reexamination of Philippine legal procedures to make these "more helpful to the victims, more forceful against the suspected perpetrators, and more demanding of government agents to solve such cases, and at the same time streamlining these procedures and remedies." One of these was to explore more remedies for the aggrieved parties aside from the writ of habeas corpus.

Puno said the "judicialization of politics" grew out of the failure of the political departments to protect people's liberties. Previously, he said, the protection of human rights had been entrusted to the political branches of government or electorally accountable officials and not to politically independent judiciaries.

He said that over the years, the expectation that human rights could best be protected by the political branches had been disproved. "Elected officials usually go for what is popular but the vindication of human rights sometimes demand taking unpopular decisions especially in instances where, due to technicalities, the right of the righteous is trumped by the rights of the wicked."

One woman's pain

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"AM I DOING THE RIGHT THING?" THAT IS A question that invariably crops up in conversations with women—and their parents—sharing stories of violence, abuse, betrayal and deception, most often from the men in their lives.

When I was much younger and still fired up with feminist zeal and naïve idealism, I would almost always reply: "Of course!" And I do still believe that standing up for yourself, finding resources of courage and strength you never thought you had, is worth all the pain and difficulty to follow.

But these days, I tend to take a more cautious outlook. With the passage of the law against violence against women and their children, our hopes were certainly raised about the possibility of living in a world without violence. But even with the law in place, gender-based violence is proving to be difficult to uproot, much less eradicate. Much of this has to do with the ignorance, if not incompetence and outright corruption, of law enforcers, including prosecutors and judges. But social attitudes toward women who go public with their abuse also play a large part in perpetuating the violence.

This is why I'm more inclined these days to say, "Well, you'll never know how it'll turn out." There is no limit to the ways lawyers, prosecutors and judges can twist and misinterpret the law, and no limit to the entrenched attitudes and biases of men in positions of power.

Also, there is no telling just how much a woman—and her children—will pay when and if the storm blows over. For some, the price may prove too steep for the uncertain results; others may think the lessons learned along the way make the difficulties worth it.

* * *

"AM I doing the right thing?" was a question voiced out by Cecile Quiambao, a journalist who has reported mainly for wire agencies and now writes economic articles for a foreign publication. She provided the answer to her own question: "Of course I am!" she said, smiling bravely.

The "right thing" for Cecile was bringing charges of abuse against her husband of nearly 18 years, the father of her 15-year-old daughter.

This is a story that concerns our own community of journalists, as her husband (who ironically shares the same first name) happens to be the bureau chief of a major wire agency.

Though Cecile says the manhandling began many years ago, it was only a few months ago that the violence reached a level that she deemed actionable. Displaying pictures of her taken in the emergency room (where she went for a medico-legal report), she says the bruises, cuts and trauma were so bad that she had to be hospitalized. Cecile adds that her husband even came after her with a crow bar, shattering the windows of her pick-up when she managed to run out of the gate.

At the root of the dispute between husband and wife is an affair that Cecile's husband embarked on with a fellow climber, mountain climbing being an activity he took up at the onset of his 40s. "I feel sorry for the girl," states Cecile, who thinks her husband's girlfriend is well-educated and smart, judging from her love letters, which Cecile happened to discover.

But he is fighting, says Cecile, "not for the girlfriend but only for himself." How else explain, she says, his stubborn insistence on contesting the property division when all Cecile wants is "for all our conjugal property to be transferred to the name of our only child."

* * *

IF this can happen to someone like Cecile, who is financially independent, even after many years of staying at home to look after their daughter, who first researched the law and women's rights before talking to a lawyer, and who has friends in the media, then you can imagine just how common abuse of women is.

I warn Cecile that just as she has access to the media, so does her husband. He could also very well turn the tables on her, as many husbands caught in marital disputes have done. He may accuse her of being emotionally and mentally unstable. In fact, she thinks, her husband is filing for nullity of their marriage based on her "psychological incapacity."

But one thing Cecile has that few women show is fortitude. She certainly sounded determined during our lunch.

Is she doing the right thing? The right thing is whatever works for every woman, for every woman deciding to take things into her own hands. One woman's pain can be another's triumph.

* * *

WHEN AIDS first became a matter of international concern, among the first groups to respond to the crisis was the American theater community, mainly because it was also among the first communities to be devastated by the disease. One of the earliest artistic endeavors to emerge from the Age of AIDS was a stage musical—"Rent"—inspired by the opera "La Boheme." But instead of tuberculosis haunting the romantic leads, in "Rent" they are living instead with HIV/AIDS.

Songs from "Rent" are expected to be among the musical numbers to be featured in "Break the Silence: Aid for AIDS," a stage presentation featuring numbers from Broadway musicals, performed by distinguished Filipino stage artists. "Break the Silence" will be staged on Tuesday, July 24 at 7 p.m. at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, Yuchengco Tower 2, RCBC Plaza. The staging is for the benefit of the Remedios AIDS Foundation (for purposes of disclosure, I sit on the board of advisers of Remedios), in cooperation with Thinking Cap Inc. Remedios is one of the first local NGOs working on issues of HIV/AIDS, maintaining a clinic for the HIV positive community, and engaging in public education and advocacy efforts. Tickets are available at P1,000 each. For inquiries, call Ticketworld at 891-9999.

Old textbooks

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THE RECENT CONTROVERSY OVER TEXTbooks and the hilarious errors they contain drew a lot of comment in the media. Some commentators even compared and contrasted the textbooks of their childhood with the contested books of today. Perhaps nostalgia has clouded their vision, but some people actually asked for the return of the "Pepe en Pilar" series that are too elementary for today's children. Nobody seemed old enough or willing to expose their true age by referring fondly to the pre-war Camilio Osias "Philippine Readers."

I completed a set of Osias "Readers" by patiently searching through all the used bookstores along Recto, not for the dated educational content, but rather for the beautiful black and white Philippine illustrations by none other than Fernando Amorsolo. His scenes of simple rural life, the harvesters smiling despite heavy toil under the sun, suggested a paradise lost when the Japanese occupied the country, an age ingrained in the Filipino memory as "*pistaym*" (peace time). Amorsolo made everyone smile: If you look closely, even the carabaos seem to smile like the laughing cow on the popular brand of French cheese (*la vache qui rit* or plain "KIRI").

Among the old history textbooks on my shelf, one stood out last week: a small, forgotten volume by Conrado Benitez, entitled "Philippine History In Stories," published in the United States by Ginn and Company in 1928, with illustrations by Pablo Amorsolo. Knowing that many children would not continue studying into the intermediate grades, Benitez provided Philippine history for the primary grades in the form of simple stories in simple language. The book covers the pre-Spanish period to the early American period. The chapter headings are: "Part I: Who are the Filipinos?"; "Part II: The Spaniards Conquer the Philippines"; "Part III: Filipinos Become Christians"; "Part IV: The Filipinos Work for the Spaniards"; "Part V: The Filipinos Revolt But Do Not Unite"; "Part VI: The Philippines Are Closed to the World"; "Part VII: The Philippines Are Opened to the World"; "Part VIII: The Filipinos Unite and Ask for reforms"; "Part IX: America Comes to the Philippines."

While the book may be old at 79 years old, none of the current textbooks for the same level can compare, because Benitez used primary sources both in Spanish and English for his textbook. Many textbook authors today simply cull from other textbooks, or use the minimum learning or desired learning competencies as an outline rather than undertake real research.

The Benitez textbook is hard-bound in cloth and made of sturdy paper so it can withstand mishandling by children. Illustrations are sharp and clear. There is also a reference to the Philippine-American War that some current textbooks hide under the rug for fear that it would ruffle RP-US relations.

Since I was raised to think that any educational tool used in the American period is suspect, the Benitez book was not only a breath of fresh air, it was a ray of sunshine. We are familiar with Lapulapu, Gomburza, Rizal, Bonifacio Aguinaldo, Del Pilar, etc., but some of the stories he drew from the Spanish period were new even to me. For example, "When a Cigar Cost Seven Pesos" reads:

"In 1782, during the rule of Governor Jose Basco y Vargas, the Spanish government established a tobacco monopoly. Under this system the Filipinos of Northern Luzon were forced to plant tobacco and to sell it to the government at the price fixed by the Spanish officials. They had no choice about what they should plant, and they were not allowed to name the price they wanted for their crop. The tobacco monopoly lasted one hundred years. It did much to help the growing of a better quality of tobacco, and during this time Manila cigars became known around the world. At the same time the harsh methods of the officials brought hardships and suffering to the Filipinos.

"Pedro Kalinga, a farmer in the Cagayan Valley, was one among many who suffered hardships because of the tobacco monopoly. He and his family lived in a bamboo hut near Tuguegarao. Pedro was told each year that he must plant tobacco. When the plants were about two feet high, the Spanish tobacco inspector counted the plants and put the number down in his notebook; he also counted the leaves on each plant.

"The inspector came frequently to see that Pedro had not taken any of the leaves to his house. He and his family could smoke their own tobacco only while they were in the field.

"Unfortunately Pedro liked to smoke, and sometimes he took tobacco to his house in spite of the rule. One day the inspector came to Pedro's house and found him with a cigar in his mouth. The inspector reported Pedro to the Spanish officials. They fined Pedro two pesos and then made him pay five pesos more for the cost of the trial. So poor Pedro had to pay in all seven pesos because he smoked in his home a cigar which he had grown in his own field."

It is amazing how effective storytelling can be in teaching history. We are not saying that we should return to something that is old, rather that we should learn from these old textbooks and adapt what is useful to our time. But if we have problems with content, grammar and clarity of thought, then we are truly in deep trouble.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

To run, to fly

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

FOR YEARS NOW, TRAVELING AROUND THE COUNTRY, what has disturbed me most about our governance is the lack of priority given to public spaces. In many towns, the most conspicuously absent are children's playgrounds, an absence made even more alarming by the presence, in every town and city, of a huge cockpit arena. Cockfights over children's play—no wonder the country is so messed up.

In fairness, I've noticed that in the last few years more cities and towns, as well as richer subdivisions, have put up playgrounds. Sadly though, these playgrounds often seem underused, or even avoided. My article today will look at some of the reasons this happens, reasons that are so basic they end up being overlooked.

'Mainit'

I'll use Manila as an example. Some time last year, I noticed that playgrounds had popped up throughout the city. They had swings and other play equipment, painted with eye-catching colors. Yet I could sense immediately that something was wrong. Most times when I would pass through, even on weekends, they only had a few children playing.

One weekend, I decided to put on my anthropologist-journalist hat and do a bit of cultural investigation. I visited three playgrounds and began interviewing the people there.

The parents and children did appreciate the playgrounds. What was so interesting was that several parents explained that they had grown up in rural areas and wanted their children to have a taste of their own childhood when they had spaces where they could run.

The children echoed their parents' sentiments, and I could understand why. All of them were from urban poor communities, where there was no space at all to run, except the streets which were too dangerous.

This doesn't mean that playgrounds are only for urban areas. The need to run is so much part of our human evolution. (Why do you think people get such a high when they jog?) For children though, running is all the more important for conditioning their muscles and fine-tuning their motor coordination. Yet notice how in Filipino families we're always warning children: "Don't run, don't run."

Let me get back to the interviews. I asked the parents what they thought about the swings, slides and see-saws, some of which were quite fancy, even imported. "*Maganda*," most of them replied, in a tone that suggested a polite "nice." With more probing, I realized that some of them were actually afraid of the equipment. They feared the children falling. I assured the parents that children are usually quite good about calculating their risks, but I could see why they were worried, and I will get back to that point shortly.

I also asked the parents how often they came to the playgrounds. "*Paminsan minsan* (sometimes)," most replied, citing busy schedules, whether in offices or in homes, as their main reason. But several also mentioned something I had been anticipating: "*masyadong mainit*."

The heat. One could argue that there's nothing you can do about that considering this is a tropical country. But I could see—no, feel—what the parents were saying. Even toward the end of the day, the playgrounds were hot and, worse, there was no shade. The playgrounds were actually built on places that used to have trees but our wise city officials cut them down. So what we now had were (I can't call them playgrounds) empty lots with play equipment. This in a country where parents fret not just about the heat but about their children (daughters especially) becoming "*maitim*" (dark).

Modernity

Here then is some friendly advice to our local government and subdivision officials: Don't drive nature out when you build playgrounds. It's better for the children and it actually costs less to build ecologically-friendly playgrounds.

The problem with many of our playgrounds is that they build on distorted concepts of "modernity."

There's a particularly useful Internet site (freeplaynetwork.org.uk) that interested mayors and parents can visit. Click first on "Places of Woe," where they have pictures of what a playground should **not** be, and you'll find they look exactly like our playgrounds: some steel swings and slides, no trees, and concrete floors.

Cemented grounds are said to be "safer" but I wonder. I thought about the parents I had interviewed in Manila's playgrounds and realized their fears were not so much of the swings and slides per se than of the possibility that their children would fall off and land on concrete. It's different if they fell on grass, or even on gravel and pebbles, which you find in natural settings.

All over the world, there's been a trend toward playgrounds for "environmental learning" that sees the value of playgrounds with grass, stones and trees. The freeplaynetwork site describes playgrounds as places to engage with nature, to be sociable and solitary, to create imaginary worlds, to test boundaries, to construct and alter surroundings, to experience change and continuity, and to take acceptable levels of risk. All those functions can be reduced to one objective: preparing our children for adulthood and the real world.

If you use this environmental learning philosophy, then you realize you don't need to buy expensive steel play equipment. So much of our "junk" could be recycled for the playgrounds as raw materials that the children can use to play with, from box crates (do you see kids building their own playhouses?) to used tires (do you see swings?). Last year, after the supertyphoons, we could have harvested the trees that fell. Branches as well as the trunks, when sawn off with different heights, are wonderful for children to climb, balance themselves on and jump off from.

Our skills at improvising should extend into play equipment, and we shouldn't worry about imitating those expensive imported stuff. The Europeans emphasize the need to mimic the realities of natural environments in playgrounds: using uneven terrains for example, and in play equipment, having ladders with uneven spaces in between. That way, children develop not just their motor skills but also their ability to recognize depths and distances.

I'm going to talk more about these playgrounds on Friday, showing how they can be integrated into a broader plan of public spaces. For now, I hope our local government officials will get people to think more about properly designed playgrounds. For better or for worse, children never forget their childhood. Years from now, they will be telling their children, maybe even grandchildren, about the good mayor who first created this wonderland of a playground for them.

Maybe Unicef, the European Union and other European embassies can think of how they can help our officials to access materials on creating safe learning spaces for children, places where you can tell the kids: "Go run! Go fly like the wind!"

LETTERS

Disrespect for media people

REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT the Government Service Insurance System has grounds to charge the officers of the National Press Club with qualified theft and violation of the anti-fencing law for selling the Manansala mural, they are certainly guilty of destroying the lofty standing and respect that the journalism profession had held in our country and in the world.

The painting by National Artist Vicente Manansala, which was sold for P10 million to an art gallery, was a national legacy. It was donated to the press club by Eugenio Lopez, publisher of the Manila Chronicle, who commissioned the artist to paint the mural on one of the walls of the NPC building's then-classy restaurant. A true artist, Manansala depicted the Filipino journalist in the realistic context of the national condition.

Painted in modernistic fashion, the mural showed an emaciated reporter pounding his typewriter while a fat, cigar-chewing politician or businessman clasps the writer's eyes. The fat man's other hand holds a fistful of pesos. A figure, half-man and half-woman, apparently distributing relief goods with strings attached to her/his fingers, hovers over the duo.

Below the hovering figure are ragged children, women and men with upraised arms and hollow eyes. In the background are a few multistory buildings and mansions, surrounded by a vast sea of squatters' hovels and dirty *esteros* (squalid creeks). A spirit in the form of a woman—the spirit of truth and compassion—floats away from the morbid scene. The painting reminds us of Picasso's "Guernica."

Journalists appreciated the painting for its artistic value and for its expression of the truth and of the journalists' aspiration to change society for the better. If the present NPC officers had any respect for art and the noble aims of the profession of journalism, they would not have sold the painting. They would have preserved it or donated it to the national museum, instead of selling it, perhaps, to be chopped up for sale to private buyers. They don't need the money as the NPC has a steady income from office rentals, fund-raising schemes and membership dues which they had doubled in an illegal convention.

Also, they have illegally amended the club's by-laws making non-journalists from "allied professions" regular members with the right to vote, thus alienating the club from legitimate journalists. No wonder members from the mainstream publications and broadcast industry have abandoned the club.

—MANUEL F. ALMARIO,
NPC lifetime member,
mfalmario@yahoo.com

'Trapo' rearing ugly head on young senators

AMONG THE NEW SENATORS ARE fresh faces who offer bright prospects for a new brand of politics, which my No. 1 senatorial candidate, Dr. Martin Bautista, aptly calls the politics of duty. These new faces include Francis "Chiz" Escudero, Alan Peter Cayetano, Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Antonio Trillanes IV. But, alas, the 14th Senate has yet to convene and already we are witnessing another ugly spectacle of traditional politics.

I refer in particular to the shameful decision of Escudero and Cayetano to back the candidacy of Manuel Villar for Senate president. Positioning themselves as "genuine" oppositionists during the campaign, Escudero and Cayetano, together with their "padrino" Villar, now find themselves aligned with administration senators. I could think of only one reason Escudero and Cayetano are in such a rush to ruin their political career.

My guess is that Villar contributed heavily to their campaign kitty and the two neophytes are simply paying back. But how about us, the electorate who bought into the promise of new politics?

On second thought, all is not lost. We still have Senator Trillanes, and hopefully Dr. Bautista—in 2010.

—GABBY MARQUEZ,
marquezdegabriel@yahoo.com

'Abaya' in Saudi; 'Burqa' in Afghanistan

I WAS VERY MUCH BEMUSED BY Michael L. Tan's column titled "Crossing borders." (INQUIRER, 7/13/07) However, women in Saudi Arabia don't wear the *burqa*; they wear the *abaya*.

The *burqa* is worn by women in Afghanistan, and I believe this is due to the teachings of the Taliban. The version of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia prescribes a different dress code.

—LOUIE DE LEON,
de_leon@voila.fr

Former SC chief right on Trillanes, Panlilio

I CANNOT HELP BUT AGREE WITH FORmer Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban when he wrote in his July 1 column thus: "The last elections produced some jolting results, the most startling being the victory of Antonio Trillanes IV on the national level and of (Ed) Panlilio on the local level."

Likewise, I am one with Chief Justice Panganiban when he noted that "inexperienced in the ways of politics both (Trillanes and Panlilio) defied the organizational odds of 'men, money and machine' and ran on plain guts."

Indeed, the former chief justice hit the nail on the head when he pointed out that both Trillanes and Panlilio "symbolized the yearning of our people for genuine reforms and their disgust for lying, cheating, and stealing."

—CRISOSTOMO B. VILAR,
vice mayor,
Pagsanjan, Laguna

Pope hailed for reviving Church tradition

I READ WITH INTEREST THE NEWS story regarding Pope Benedict XVI's recent Apostolic Letter titled "Summorum Pontificum," which liberalizes the use of the Roman Missal of 1962 or the Tridentine rite or Old Latin Mass. (INQUIRER, 7/09/07)

Born in the late '60s, my generation never experienced the Old Latin Mass. I myself only know of the changes introduced by the Church during and after the so-called liturgical reform of the '70s.

I discovered the Tridentine rite four years ago in a church in Quezon City and it left a deep impression in my heart. (Of course, I have read in books how pre-Vatican II Catholics worshipped.) If this was the kind of Mass that my great-grandparents attended, how impoverished we are now for having been deprived for so long of this rich and profoundly Catholic tradition; I literally wept at this thought. From then on, I developed a love for the Old Latin Mass.

We Catholics should thank our Pope for the "Summorum Pontificum." In that letter, he emphasized that the Tridentine rite was not abolished juridically and, therefore, technically it was never forbidden.

Perhaps, the letter has this important message to modern Catholics: There is a need to rethink and reflect on the distortions that have crept into the celebration of the Mass. Words and actions that are not found in the missal have been inserted into the celebration, like testimony at the middle of the Mass, clapping, using secular music and the so-called liturgical dancing. All these have diminished the religious solemnity of the Eucharistic celebration. They have transformed an act of worship into an entertainment show. I hope that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines will give importance to the "Summorum Pontificum" and do away with the distortions. After all, people come to church to seek the Bread of Life and not to listen to sermons about politics or economics.

I firmly believe that a revival of the Church's traditional practices will strengthen Catholicism. It will also arrest the decline in the membership of the Church. I earnestly pray that this rich tradition known as the traditional Latin Mass will resound once again inside our churches.

—HERBERT B. ROSANA, Ph.D.,
Bicol University, Legazpi City

Grateful for Calipjo Go's new exposé

ANTONIO CALIPJO GO'S FULL-PAGE AD (INQUIRER, 07/09/07) should serve as an eye-opener for everyone, in particular, the men and women in the Department of Education.

Instead of filing libel and harassment suits against Go, the DepEd, the Instructional Materials Council Secretariat and the writers and publishers should commend the man and congratulate him for his genuine concern for the country's public elementary and high school students who use (have used and continue to use) the erroneous books referred to in the ad.

The DepEd cannot be so blind as not to fully acknowledge the gravity and seriousness of the errors by giving the questioned textbooks a rating of "90% to 94% for CORRECTNESS" after the academicians it had commissioned to review the books found conceptual, factual and language errors in them, as pointed out by Go.

One only has to read and re-read Go's full-page ad to see and agree with what the man has discovered to be errors that need to be corrected, lest our students take those errors to heart as "gospel truth." (Heaven forbid!)

My family, especially my youngest daughter who is in third year high, is most grateful to Go for the invaluable information he has provided us through his ad.

As one who has had the opportunity to work with the then DECS' Textbook Board Secretariat (now IMCS) and the then Alemar-Phoenix Publishing House Inc., I accept Go's call for the formation of "a group of sincere and dedicated individuals who will see to it that the errors are stricken off these books."

Count me in, Mr. Calipjo Go, and, like you, "I will not collect a single cent."

—JEREMIAS DECENA,
jeremiasdecena@yahoo.com

No 'masseurs' in LandBank

THIS PERTAINS TO NEAL CRUZ'S column titled "Performance massaging at LBP, DOF." (INQUIRER, 7/13/07) We would like to make the following clarifications:

First, LandBank sets its financial targets (for the coming year) at the last quarter of every year as part of its annual planning, wherein it takes into account factors, such as macroeconomic indicators, trends and forecasts from the banking and other related industries, as well as the bank's historical financial performance. These annual targets are presented to LandBank's board of directors for approval.

It has **never** been LandBank's practice to adjust its annual targets for revenues, expenditures and net income midway or at any time during the year.

On the average, it has targeted an increase in its net income level this year—by at least 10 percent over that of the previous year's. Variances of actual figures on revenues and expenses versus set targets may occur during the year due to various factors, such as movements in interest and exchange rates as well as sale of big assets.

LandBank's greater and more important concern as a bank is the net income target as it is one of the most important measures of our performance.

From 2001 to 2005, LandBank consistently attained and even exceeded its net income target. This was a result of its prudent and judicious use of resources, effective cost management and aggressive marketing efforts, coupled with enhanced customer service.

Second, the notable increase in LandBank's total expenses for 2004 as reported in Cruz's column was triggered by the substantial growth in deposit liabilities which, in turn, led to the rise in the interest expense on deposits. The shift on the tax imposed on banks from value added to gross receipts tax was also a contributing factor.

—AGUSTIN FREDERICK A. APILADO,
assistant vice president,
Corporate Affairs Department,
Land Bank of the Philippines

Mute on int'l reaction to killings

THE DEAFENING SILENCE OF the Department of Foreign Affairs and of the concerned foreign service posts on the denunciations made by international human rights groups regarding the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines is tragic. These institutions are expected to explain and defend Philippine policies and positions; instead they have chosen to remain mute and deaf.

The Philippine Mission to the UN and the Philippine Consulate General in New York should be more aggressive and forthright in addressing the concerns of those international human rights groups. Moreover, the heads of posts should develop personal contacts and relations with key members of the non-governmental organizations.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo should read and study the reports of the international groups invited to help the country address these concerns, instead of just replying with rhetoric. An editorial (INQUIRER, 4/1/07) noted Romulo's "obtuse reaction" to the Alston report, which lends credence to the belief that he may not even have read the report. As the country's foreign secretary, Romulo should give clear and precise guidelines to foreign service posts on these sensitive matters and it should be quick to defend the country. Often, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye are the ones commenting on and reacting to foreign policy issues. At the time that the Europen Union team was here, Secretary Romulo was in North Korea.

I'm still wondering, what for? He should cut his foreign trips which are mostly photo ops and feel-good junkets and concentrate on basic foreign policy issues which cry for bold and decisive advocacy. It is time for the DFA to wake up and assume the leadership in foreign affairs—which it is mandated to do.

Based on news reports, Romulo has not issued any statement to defend the policies and positions of the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

—REMEDIOS BALBIN, Ph.D.,
former commissioner,
National Amnesty Commission;
president, Foundation for Social Justice

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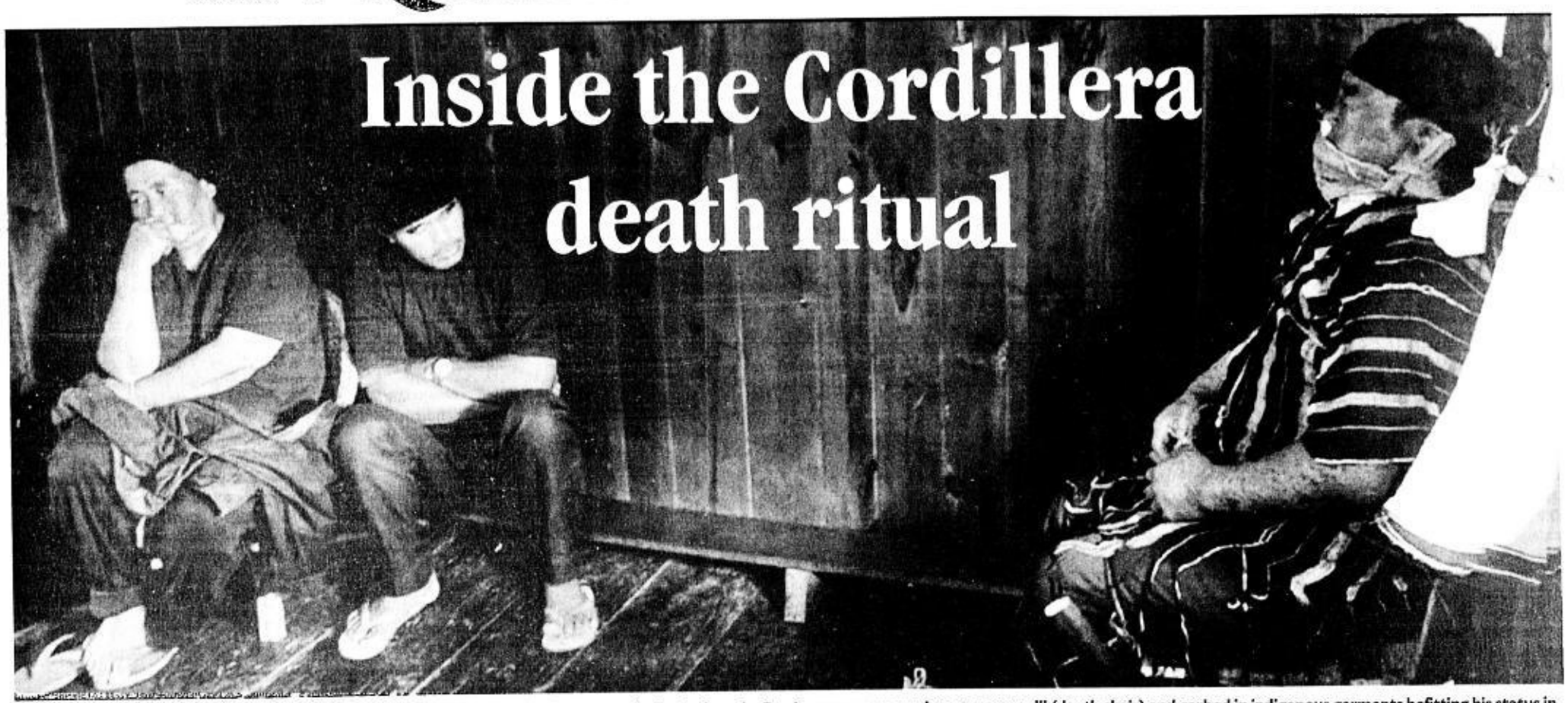
Inside the Cordillera death ritual



RELATIVES of Florencio "Lakay Sumbad" Pecdasen keep vigil in his wake. A respected elder in Sagada, Pecdasen was propped up on a sangadil (death chair) and garbed in indigenous garments befitting his status in the community. ROLAND RABANG

By Roland Rabang
Contributor

SEVEN ELDERLY WOMEN in Sagada, Mt. Province, gather one night around a hut no larger than five square meters. Linked arms to shoulder, the women chant as they sway to its "sing-song" rhythm: *"I taoli yo nan swerti kadakami, ya san an-ak yo."*

It is the night's mantra sung in Kankanaey: "May you bring luck back to us and to your descendants."

Inside the hut, all eyes focus on a figure occupying a spot of importance.

Florencio "Sumbad" Pecdasen, an elder of *dap-ay* Tukipa in the village of Demang, has been dead three days. On the third day of his death, he was dressed in indigenous garments befitting a *kadangyan* (nobility) and was propped on what locals call a *sangadil* (death chair).

On the night of the third day, the women sang dirges as the elder figureheads of Demang and Dag-dag villages chanted the *baya-o* (tribute to the dead).

The *baya-o* extolled the virtues of the dead and sought his blessings for the community and for those who shared resources and efforts to usher the passing of the dead back to the world of their departed ancestors.

"Sumbad was an industrious man," the elders chanted. "For even in his old age he would take up hard chores including gathering firewood."

Unfortunately, Sumbad's industry triggered his decline. His village mates said he climbed a tree to cut some branches for firewood. He missed a step, fell and broke his back. He survived the fall but the man, at 75, was unable to walk again and died months later.

But in his prime as an elder of *dap-ay* Tukipa, Sumbad knew what he wanted, and declared this in no uncertain terms to his family and the *dap-ay* council leadership: When he dies, he wants to be propped up on a *sangadil* and buried in the ways of his father, the respected Lakay Pecdasen, and his ancestors—his coffin hanging on a ledge at the limestone cliffs of Bao-eng.

DAYTOY TI AMIANAN

No one knows for sure how or when the practice of placing the dead on a *sangadil* started.

Even Esteban "Pollat" Bosaing, acknowledged repository of oral tradition in the community, can only quote versions from folktales.

He said in the olden days, the dead was merely left lying on the ground. By nightfall, when all were asleep, the dogs often sneak in to eat the corpse. Or, without knowing it, the dead might turn into a carabao or some other animal so people might fall ill, says the *mammadto* (soothsayer), if they butcher and eat it.

Sometimes the *anito* (ancestors) tasked to fetch the dead may think that the person was merely asleep seeing that it was only lying about, so they leave, unable to complete their task. This has prompted elders to decide on placing the dead on a chair to prevent these mishaps from happening.

The less dramatic but pragmatic version, according to Bosaing, has something to do with presentation. The dead can look better in traditional regalia if seated, rather than lying in a coffin.

Even if the person's system has ceased to function, the person is not "dead" until declared so by the community.

In the case of Sumbad, it was three days after he breathed his last. Only when he was seated on a chair that the dirges and chants for the dead began.

Sumbad was strapped on an ordinary wooden chair, his thumbs and big toes bound together by a rope made of rattan and his jaw tied shut with a *kubkuba* or a soft bark used to weave g-strings before Ilocano traders introduced their *inabel* (woven cloth).

The design of his death garments indicates he was among the privileged in the community.

"Black cloth with seven stripes implies that he is among the *kadangyan*," says Bosaing. The less privileged wear blue with no stripes.

However, with the required number of pigs to be butchered (21 and 18), it is difficult to distinguish the *kadangyan* from those who are not.

"The ritual takes place only when a person asks for it and if the family can afford the cost," says Rey Fiar-od, an official in Barlig, Mt. Province.

However, even if the family is financially capable, the ritual cannot be performed if it does not own a *takba* or a ritual basket.

"To own a *takba* means you are part of the ritual and a culture bearer," says photographer Tommy Hafalla. "Not to own one simply means you have turned your back from the old ways and embraced another set of beliefs."

Beliefs

This other set of beliefs might be the Christian faith and the reason Sumbad's daughter has expressed her reluctance to place her father on a death chair.

She was only prevailed upon by the rest of the clan who said it was her father's wish that this ritual be performed.

Today the death ritual is at best a "compromise" between Christianity that was introduced by western missionaries and local traditions and beliefs.

Thus, during Sumbad's wake, the *baya-o* was performed as much as Christian hymns were sung.

In Sagada, there is a cemetery on a hill where Christian burials are performed, but overlooking the hill, a rock face is full with hanging coffins from traditional burials.

It seems, however, that Sumbad won out in the end. Wrapped in his burial shroud in fetal position, the village's men, and sometimes women, carried him on their backs to his final destination in a practice called *binatbato*.

The community takes turns in carrying the body towards the limestone cliffs as to do so is considered good luck.

Gruesome as it may sound, the luck happens when body fluids of the dead are smeared on to the one who is carrying the corpse, except that it will only occur if the fluids are not washed off for three days.

Bosaing says the belief is so strong that those who participate fight for the chance to carry the corpse.

Are these practices still relevant in this age? Without hesitation, Fiar-od says "yes."

"The bottom line in the observance of these practices is unity and discipline. These values do not fade in time," he says.

"So is the observance of *tambo* (sharing). The culture of sharing will ensure that the people and their practices will endure for generations to come," says Hafalla.

'Hospitel' gives hope to heart patients

By Anselmo Roque
Cabanatuan City

FROM THE LOOKS OF ITS lobby, the five-story building on the campus of the Wesleyan University Philippines in Cabanatuan City could be mistaken for a hotel.

Actually, it is a specialty hospital—the first facility in Northern Luzon to serve heart patients.

Doctors running the Wesleyan University Philippines Cardiovascular and Medical Center (WUPCMC) want to treat the facility as a "hospitel," or a hospital with a hotel ambience and service, to lessen the stress suffered by their patients.

More than this, though, the "hospitel" seeks to provide hope to heart patients, including those who need immediate surgery, in the provinces.

"This hospital is mostly for handling cardiovascular cases. We have the same skills, equipment and facilities as [those provided] at the Philippine Heart Center (PHC). It is like being attended to by the PHC in a different location," said Dr. Santos Jose Abad, WUPCMC medical director.

The WUPCMC has made special arrangements with the PHC for the latter's top heart doctors, surgeons, anesthesiologists and nurses to be made available to the hospital on certain days, Abad said. Complementing them are doctors and specialists practising in Nueva Ecija.

Abad is also the chief of critical care medicine division of the PHC, the country's top facility servicing heart patients. The WUPCMC's chief of surgery, Dr. Florante Lomibao, is also the chief of surgeons at the PHC.

First patient

Also called the "Heart Center of the North," the WUPCMC charges lower fees than those from the PHC and other hospitals in Metro Manila, according to Abad.

"There is also what we call 'C.H.' in the practice of medicine, which means 'charge to heaven,'" Abad said, referring to cases when patients could not afford to settle all their fees.

"We screen patients coming to us and help them find a way to cope with the expenses for correcting their heart problem," he said.

As if to test the hospital's mission, the first patient who sought treatment was a tricycle driver, Leopoldo Parica, 38.

Suffering from rheumatic heart disease since he was 18, PHC doctors told Parica that his heart condition had worsened and that he needed to be operated on immediately.

His hope, however, was dashed when told that more than 800 patients were waiting for a free operation and that he would need at least P600,000 for the procedure and incidental expenses.

Resigned to his fate, he returned home to Nueva Ecija. "I left everything to the will of God," Parica said, adding that he had prepared himself to die.

But then he learned about the "Heart Center of the North."

WUPCMC doctors told his family that the operation would cost him P375,000, Parica said. "We asked for a discount. They reduced the quoted price by more than P100,000," he said.

Parica said his parents sold the family's small parcel of agricultural land to pay part of the expense. He still owes the hospital a big amount but he has promised to pay the balance.

"What happened to me is like a miracle. Here I am now ... alive and healthy," he said.

Abad said one of Parica's valves was replaced with a metallic prosthetic valve during the open-heart surgery conducted by Lomibao and his team on May 18.

Three patients from Pampanga, Cagayan and Nueva Ecija underwent operations at the WUPCMC last month. One had an aortic valve replacement, the other a double bypass graft, and the third, a quadruple bypass graft operation.

Abad said two children, aged 4 and 9, who both had congenital heart disease, would undergo surgery soon.

Base hospital

Lawyer Guillermo Maglaya, WUPCMC president, said putting up a hospital owned and operated by the university preempted a reported plan of the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) to oblige schools offering nursing courses to have their "base hospital."

"Instead of setting up a general hospital, we decided to put up a hospital that will specialize in the treatment of the top killer in the world, which is heart disease," Maglaya said.

The building, equipment and facilities, including a sewerage treatment plant, and other features were put up at a cost of P200 million from the savings of the 61-year-old institution.

In the pipeline is the construction of another building to complete a 200-bed capacity hospital with eye and cancer centers and other areas of specialization, Maglaya said.

The WUPCMC is the only hospital in Luzon, outside of Metro Manila, which specializes in treating heart diseases. Aside from the PHC, six other hospitals in Metro Manila handle heart patients, while the Visayas has three hospitals and Mindanao, one.

"We have the latest models of the diagnostic apparatuses and facilities that can help us reach the final decision whether a heart patient will be operated on or not," Abad said.

These are the CT-scan, angiogram and the cardiac catheterization laboratory. These are in addition to the other laboratory and equipment for diagnostic examination and therapeutic treatment, he said.

Abad said the WUPCMC was set up through the learning core in the operation of the PHC. It can be considered a product of the experiences the doctors acquired at the PHC in the last 20 years, he said.

He said he would seek the help of university officials of the WUPCMC and concerned citizens of Central and Northern Luzon to put up a foundation that would help subsidize the treatment of poor patients.

An existing heart foundation based in Metro Manila can provide assistance of up to P90,000 per poor patient, he said.

He said he would also push the establishment of a halfway house for relatives of patients.

"We are a clannish people who show sympathy and love to a sick relative by staying near him or her. But they could not be accommodated inside the room of the patient," he said.

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Bossi dropped as military priority

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A top Western Mindanao military commander said the search for Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi has taken a back seat to the hunt for gunmen who killed 14 Marines in an ambush in Basilan.

"Bossi is no longer our priority," said Rear Adm. Emilio Marayag, commander of the Naval Forces in Western Mindanao.

Marayag said their immediate task now is to "run after the people that massacred the Marines" on July 10.

"We just shifted our priority now but if there's opportunity, we will continue the search for Bossi because there was no order for us to stop the search for the kidnapped priest," he said.

Marayag also confirmed that more soldiers have arrived in Basilan to run after the perpetrators of the ambush, where 14 Marines were killed. Ten of the soldiers had been beheaded.

The MILF, which owned up to the ambush, denied its troops were behind the beheadings.

It has been more than a month already since Bossi disappeared but authorities admitted they still have no clear idea where the victim is.

But Col. Jovencio Magalso, chief of Task Force Bossi, said they were still trying to find out where Bossi, 57, was being hidden.

"The Task Force Bossi is still operational and we are more focused on heavy intelligence work, gathering more information. In case information is positive, we immediately dispatch troops," Magalso said.

He said search and rescue operations were being conducted in the areas of Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Sur and some parts of Zamboanga del Norte.

Magalso said other areas being searched include those in Basilan.

Maj. Eugene Batara, spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, Westmincom chief, ordered the search to be conducted even in Sulu.

"Because we have some reports of sightings that Bossi is transferred to the area of Sulu," he said.

The Italian priest was abducted while on his way to celebrate Mass in Payao, Zamboanga Sibugay on June 10.

Authorities tagged the group of Akiddin Abdusalam behind the abduction. Abdusalam is an alleged Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) commander with links to the Abu Sayyaf.

Marines were advised by one of their commanders to keep their cool and keep in mind the government's ceasefire agreement with the MILF.

"We are not savages," Brig. Gen. Ramiro Alivio, commander of the 1st Marine Brigade, said during the turnover ceremonies for the new commander of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 1, Lt. Col. Jose Cabanban, in Maluso town.

He said that he always believed that the ceasefire agreement should be respected, despite the July 10 ambush.

"Our paramount concern ... is the utmost observance of the ceasefire agreement and to always observe the safety of the civilians," Alivio said.

Sattar Ali, MILF representative to the local ceasefire monitoring team, confirmed guerrillas were preparing for a major AFP offensive. *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

THE BODY of Cpl. Freddie Palma, one of 14 Marines killed in an MILF ambush in Basilan, lies in his hometown in Pavia, Iloilo.

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Abu Sayyaf ambush kills 2 more Marines

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE MIlitary's antiterror campaign in Mindanao suffered another setback when two Marines were killed in an ambush by Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu, the military said yesterday.

Maj. Eugene Batara, spokesperson of the military's Western Mindanao Command here, said soldiers from the Marine Battalion Landing Team 5 (MBLT-5) were in Barangay Tugas in Patikul town around 6 a.m. yesterday when fired upon by Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Batara said one soldier was also wounded and two firearms were lost.

Lt. Col. Nestor Herico, commander of the MBLT-5, said his troops were to provide road security for other forces going down from their jungle base in Patikul to the town proper when they were met with heavy firepower.

Herico said the bandits, numbering about 20, was led by Basaron Arok, son of slain Abu Sayyaf bandit Mahadun Arok.

Herico said it was not clear whether or not the bandits suffered any casualties.

"We did not check because our concern was our casualties," he said.

The military has deployed a large number of troops to Sulu in a bid to capture Indonesian bombers Dulmatin and Omar Patek.

The foreign terror suspects were allegedly being hidden by the Abu Sayyaf, a ragtag band of self-proclaimed militants involved in kidnappings and killings.

Prospects of peace in Mindanao hangs in the balance as Malacañang yesterday said it won't stand in the way if the Armed Forces of the Philippines launched an all-out war against Moro guerrillas.

"Actually, it's the sentiment of the military chief, we will not interfere. We leave it to the discretion of General (Hermogenes) Esperon," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, when sought for comments.

The Armed Forces Chief of Staff warned that an "all-out war is one of the alternatives, but it could be the last resort."

"As much as possible we want to conduct operations that are intelligence-driven ... We do not want to be indiscriminate about this because (the area) is densely populated," Esperon told reporters.

"They have admitted that the ambush was perpetrated by them so they must now bring out the offenders. I mean, those who beheaded our Marines," Esperon told reporters as he visited the wake for the slain troops.

"Otherwise, all options are open," Esperon said, alluding to a massive crackdown on MILF forces on Basilan island. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila*

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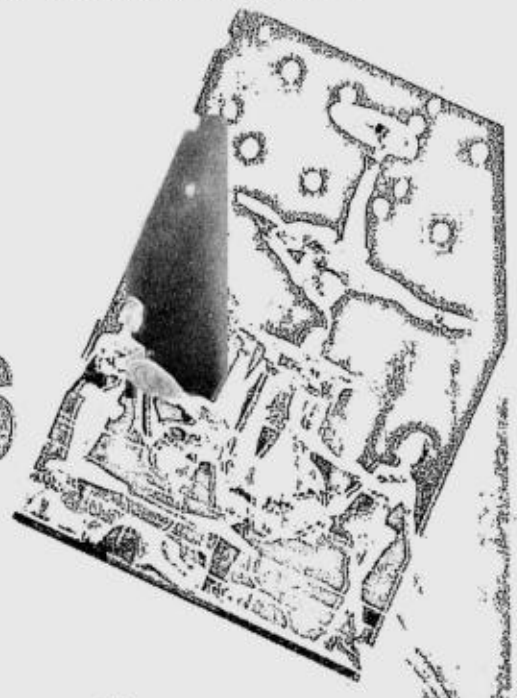

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Cebu victims of Francswiss come out, seek help of NBI

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—SOME CEBU-BASED investors of the Francswiss, an alleged online pyramiding scheme, have sought the assistance of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) regional office here in filing cases against those who defrauded them.

The first batch of complainants asked the agency to conduct an investigation and, if possible, recover the money that they invested, NBI Central Visayas director Medardo de Lemos said.

De Lemos said the complainants invested in dollars and in pesos, ranging from $1,000 to $3,000 and as much as P50,000.

"The complainants were businessmen and retirees who invested their money with the assurance that they get four-percent daily interest," De Lemos said.

The complainants explained that they were tempted to invest because of the huge interest they were supposed to get, which could not be found in other investment companies, he added.

De Lemos said the complainants received returns on their investments once, or twice, but the returns stopped coming and the Francswiss' website could not be accessed anymore.

The complainants told the NBI that the people behind the investment scheme made a presentation last May or June in a well-known hotel in Cebu City.

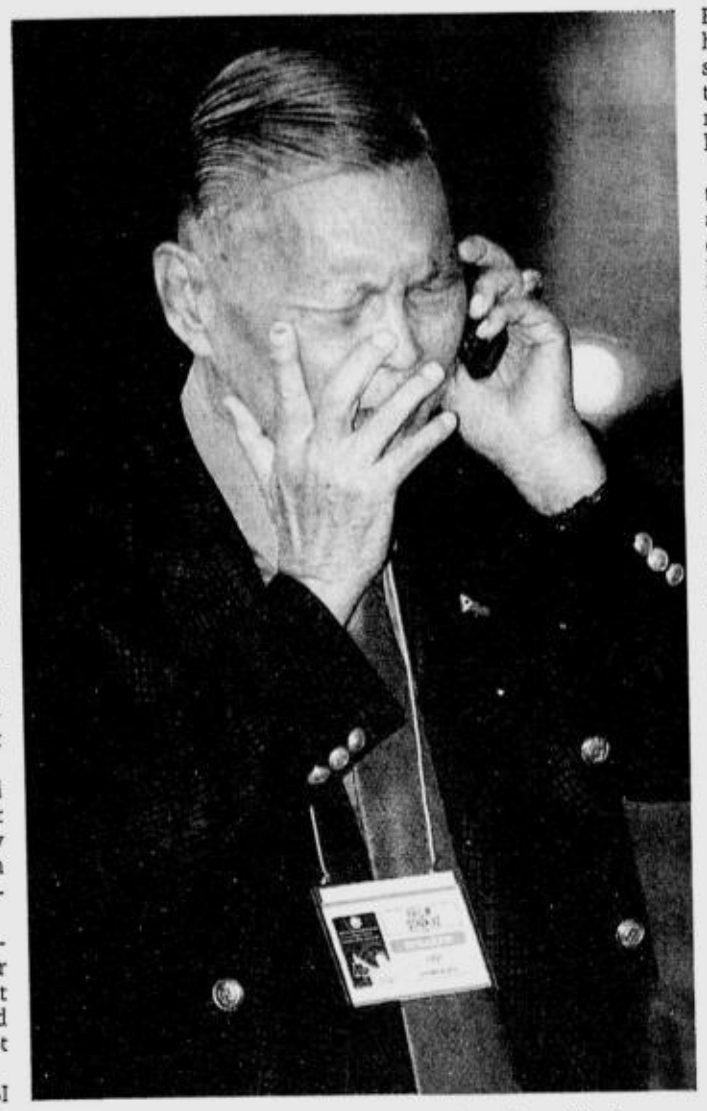
De Lemos, however, refused to divulge the name of the hotels and the people involved in the scheme pending the completion of the investigation.

He said the NBI was coordinating with the hotel management to check the names of the people who made the presentation, who had been identified by the complainants.

De Lemos said the NBI Cebu would coordinate with its Manila office to find out if those who defrauded the people in Cebu were the same ones who victimized many people in Manila.

Initially, De Lemos said the NBI Cebu might file charges of large-scale estafa or economic sabotage against the suspects in a Cebu court.

Baguio Muslims study terror law effects



JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzales takes a call on his mobile phone during the summit on extrajudicial killings organized by the Supreme Court. REM ZAMORA

BAGUIO CITY—MUSLIMS BASED here have been organizing themselves into small discussion groups to explore the impact of the Human Security Act of 2007 (Republic Act 9372) on their community.

Although Muslims are natural targets of "racial profiling" under a prevailing war on terrorism, Bedejim Abdullah, an Islamic scholar, said they have been amused by the country's antiterror law because it gives some people opportunity to make money.

Abdullah said the law obliges law enforcers to pay people falsely accused of terrorism P500,000 for each day they are detained, and pieces of their properties confiscated.

He said critics of the law appear to have missed Section 41, which outline this provision. He said the section is vulnerable to abuse.

The section guides law enforcers on the disposition of a suspected terrorist's assets, which government seizes or freezes upon the suspect's arrest.

"Upon [the suspect's] acquittal or the dismissal of the charges against him or her, the amount of P500,000 a day for the period in which properties, assets or funds were seized shall be paid to him on the concept of liquidated damages," the law says.

"The amount shall be taken from the appropriations of the police or law enforcement agency that caused the filing of the enumerated charges against [the suspect]."

Since the paranoia generated by the 2001 attacks on the United States, Muslims have stopped worrying about repressive laws, Abdullah said.

MILITANT youths from different organizations took over Malcolm Square in Baguio City on Saturday, where they spent all night writing chalk messages on the pavement against the Human Security Act. VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

"I think Muslims, in general, are not alarmed about [the antiterror law]. It has been the same situation since 2001. With or without the HSA, our lots are the same," he said.

"Maybe [falsely accused] people would find the law an opportunity to earn more money, but radicals will simply adapt to it and will raise the ante. That provision will open the way to more abuses," he said.

Abdullah had been seeking experts to explain the law for his community.

Some of the Baguio traders said they want some clarity about the law "so we can brief foreign Muslim students studying in Baguio."

Antonio Prieto, Baguio immigration officer, said about 30 African students of Islamic faith are studying in Baguio universities.

He said the students are expected to brush up on new laws that affect them, "so the schools must help inform them about the law's impact."

A public elementary school teacher last week wrote her principal asking for guidelines.

The teacher said she needs to explain the antiterror law to her students, many of whom are Muslims. *Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Cops charge 2 in extortion-bombing of buses

KORONADAL CITY—POLICE filed charges against two suspects in the bombing of a bus here, saying the two men belonged to a group that had bombed other buses earlier to extort money from the bus line owner.

Charged were Muhammad Sinsuat Cusain, 26, of M'lang, North Cotabato and Nasrudin Mangelen Gamdang, 23, of SK Pendatun, Maguindanao.

Chief Supt. Felizardo Serapio Jr., Central Mindanao police chief, said the two were behind the July 11 bomb attack on a Yellow Bus Lines unit that damaged the bus. No one was hurt in the attack.

Serapio said witnesses identified the two as among four men who left a bomb in the Yellow Bus Lines unit. The two other men are at large and believed hiding in the Liguasan Marsh.

Serapio said the four belonged to the group that was also behind previous bomb attacks that included those in Bansalan, Davao del Sur and Matalam, North Cotabato on the Weena Bus Lines.

Eight people were killed in these attacks blamed on a group that police called the Alkobar Gang.

"They have one common objective—to extort money from these two bus companies," Serapio said.

In Digos City, police said they have filed charges against the two men responsible for Saturday's bomb scare in a bus that resulted in injuries to at least five people.

Senior Supt. Samuel Navaja, Davao del Sur police chief, said Roberto Regidor, 30, and his brother Jimboy, 23, both of Matanao town, were charged with violating the Marcos-era Presidential Decree 1727, which penalizes individuals causing public alarm.

The brothers were among passengers of a Metro Shuttle bus bound for Davao City from Bansalan on Saturday afternoon.

The brothers were in a bus when they announced seeing a suspicious bag and smelling something burning at the back of the bus.

This sent some passengers jumping out through the bus windows as the bus moved. Most of those who jumped off were injured. *Charlie Señase and Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Another power tower bombed

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Unidentified men whom authorities said probably belonged to an extortion ring bombed a transmission tower of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) in a remote village here early yesterday.

The attack came after the Transco office in Northern Mindanao announced it had completed repairs on eight steel towers bombed from March to June by unidentified men in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur.

Avelino Dawis, Transco II district manager in Iligan City, said the repairs cost P4.5 million.

Senior Supt. Federico Dulay, North Cotabato police chief, said an explosive device was planted at the foot of a Transco steel tower in Barangay Nuangan here.

The tower is part of the grid that supplies electricity from the Mt. Apo geothermal plant here to other parts of Mindanao.

Dulay said the explosive went off at about 2:30 a.m. and damaged the tower's pylon.

The attack brought outages to some parts of Central Mindanao.

A Transco official, who refused to be identified for fear of retaliation from the yet unidentified attackers, said the government-run firm has been receiving extortion letters. *Edwin Fernandez and Richel Umel, Inquirer Mindanao*

7 towns to receive share in quarry funds

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—IN what was rarely done in past provincial administrations, Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio will give on Friday half of the P11.6 million collected from quarry taxes from July 2-13 to seven sand-rich towns and villages in the province.

Panlilio said he advanced the schedule of distribution of quarry revenues to July 20, instead of July 30, because the amount was already considerable at this time.

Provincial administrator Vivian Dabu said they have yet to determine how much the provincial government, the towns of Bacolor, Lubao, Sta. Rita, Porac, Floridablanca, Mabalacat and Mexico, and their respective villages would get from the P5.8-million revenue that would be released.

The amount was computed at half of the P300 tax imposed on every truckload of sand.

A Local Government Code provision and an ordinance from the provincial board set the sharing of quarry revenues on a 30-30-40 percent basis for the province, towns and barangays.

Dabu said the remaining P5.8 million would be retained by the provincial capitol to cover administrative costs.

Some mayors have clamored to use the P300, not P150, as base amount for the sharing.

The mayors have yet to formalize that recommendation in a resolution, however, Dabu told reporters.

In a separate interview, Panlilio said he would follow the present sharing scheme until the provincial board agrees to the proposal of the mayors.

He said the provincial government would also draw funds from administrative share to support social services in 13 towns where there is no quarry industry.

"Quarry operations have been giving the government a lot of resources," Panlilio said.

In collecting P11.6 million in 10 days, the Panlilio administration is likely to surpass the P29.1 million collected by the administration of former Gov. Mark Lapid for 2006, an INQUIRER review of quarry income showed.

PAMPANGA VICE Gov. Yeng Guiao is not alone anymore in the war on quarrying revenue theft. TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Lapid and his father, Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, are in the United States and could not be reached for comment on why quarry revenues in their time as governors reached only P10 to P30 million annually in the last six years.

The Lapids have not sent word either through their representatives.

Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao, who has kept a close watch on alleged quarry irregularities, said he would continue pursuing the graft case against the younger Lapid and provincial treasurer Vergel Yabut.

Guiao noted a "discrepancy" of P337 million between the collections of the Natural Resources Development Corp. from 1999 to 2001 and the elder Lapid's administration from 2002 to 2004.

In the case he filed at the Office of the Ombudsman in March, Guiao said between P600 million and P1 billion might have been lost to graft from 2004 to the first two months of 2007 under the younger Lapid's administration. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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2. By visiting the Green Army website: www.greenarmynetwork.net, then click 'Register'
3. By calling the Green Army Secretariat at 3965028 or 29

Memorial to fallen tree: Pining for Baguio pine

From page A1

lessly hacked and chopped to death in the dead of night by SLU planners."

"SLU had pretty much ignored Ewing's crusade ... [but] he has a right to free speech," said Gil Espiritu, SLU vice president for student affairs.

"But we followed rules so we can build a day-care center and a water tank to service our school and hospital, and the tree was in the way," Espiritu told the INQUIRER.

Seedlings for a tree

"SLU did not even cut the tree until we exhausted all the prerequisites, including planting 60 new pine tree seedlings around the day-care center area," he said.

Samuel Peñafiel, Cordillera director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the tree would not have survived had the building designers built the day-care center around it.

Another tree

"I actually admire Ewing's compassion [for trees]," Espiritu said.

He said Ewing and the university previously tangled over another pine tree in April, whose branches were trimmed.

That tree is located on the sidewalk along a road approaching the Buddhist temple where Ewing lives and SLU's exit driveway is located.

Espiritu said Ewing mistook the pruning for an attempt to cut it, and complained to SLU.

"I told him we had nothing to do with it, and that maybe it was the telephone company that trimmed it so the branches would not interfere with its lines," Espiritu said.

Like Bush

He said he later found out that Ewing had been paying a school guard to clear the road of cigarette butts and pine tree leaves that collect there each day.

He said this described a man who would do anything for his beliefs.

Ewing had gone the extra mile before, sending out letters through e-mail that criticized SLU and its president, Fr. Jessie Hechanova, comparing the priest to US President George W. Bush because they supposedly shared counterenvironmental policies.

Besides taking out last Sunday's advertisement, Ewing also put up a website, www.slupinetree.com, which features video clips that show SLU workers pouring concrete around the tree.

Prayers of forgiveness

The INQUIRER ran a story on Ewing when he and three women volunteers spent a whole day in June tying green ribbons around the arms of pedestrians to seek support for their campaign to save the pine tree.

The advertisement placed by the Sea of Green Movement was simply titled "... it was unnecessary" and was highlighted by a black and white picture of the tree.

It asked supporters to leave flowers at the construction site where the tree used to stand.

"Prayers of forgiveness are requested for the SLU planners," it said.

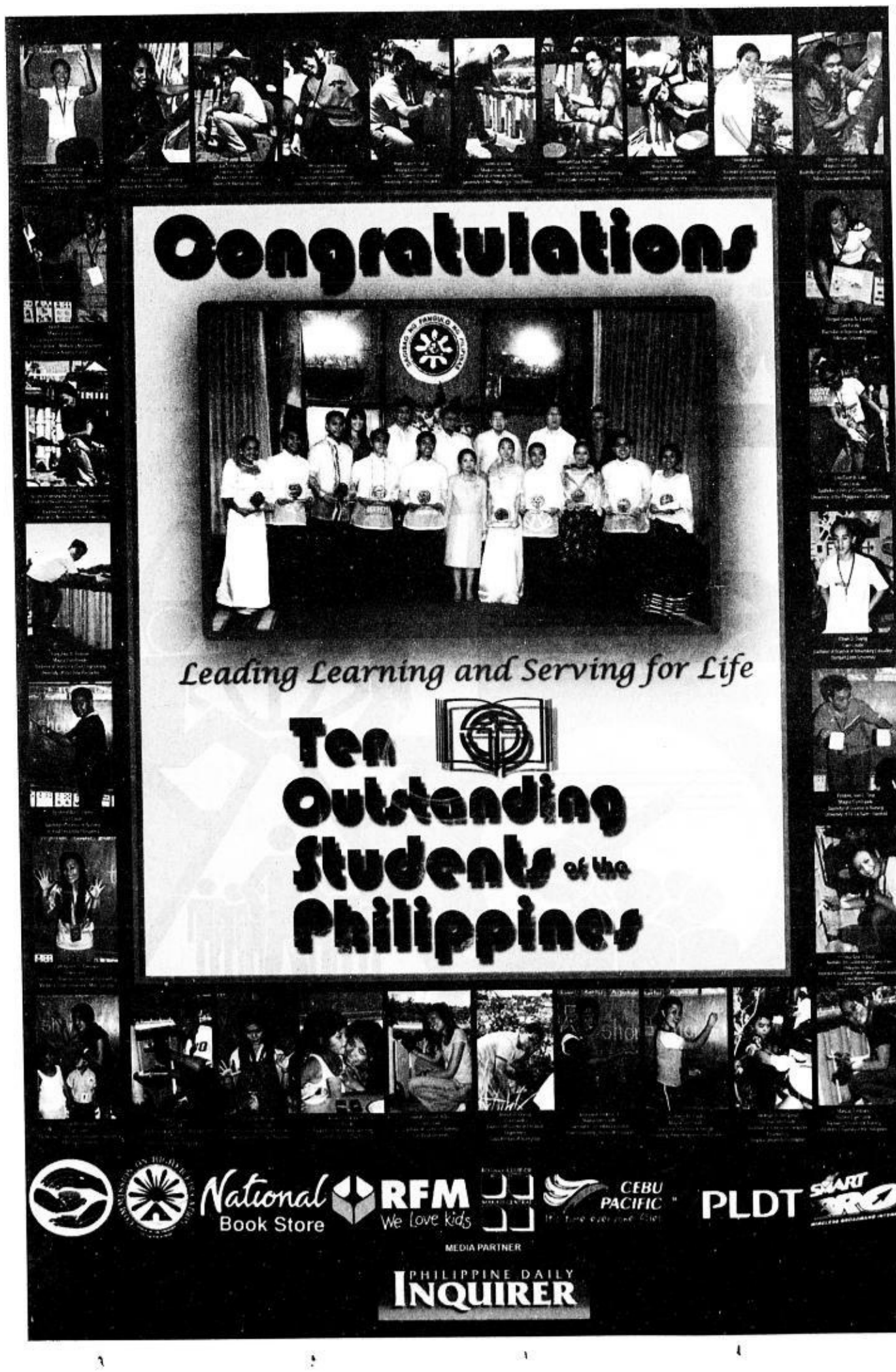
The advertisement also featured Peñafiel's letter that justifies the issuance by the DENR of a permit to cut the tree, and Ewing's reply.

"If there is a will to preserve the tree, a way will be found. It is the will to preserve the tree that is missing," Ewing wrote.

FULL-PAGE obituary announces the demise of a pine tree

PDI PHOTO

SELF-PROCLAIMED SAVIOR OF BAGUIO'S PINE TREES: Last month, Tom Ewing, a math teacher, started his crusade by going up to pedestrians and handing them green ribbons to call attention to his one-man fight against a university which scheduled axing an pine tree.



Imelda visits PGH, 'scene of crime'

From page A1

jail—my only conviction out of the 901 cases filed in court."

"I want to cry," she said after visiting the various wards of the 1,400-bed public hospital originally built in 1907 and renovated by Marcos in 1981. "My suffering and persecution were not in vain."

In a mint-green terno, her hair swept up, the 78-year-old Marcos posed for photos and shook hands with patients and hospital employees who were surprised—and amazed—to see the widow of the fallen dictator.

In 1981, Marcos, then governor of Metro Manila, launched a plan to construct a modern railway system and renovate the PGH using a loan of P1 billion from the Belgian government.

Marcos said she was to secure the 20-year "soft loan" from her good friend, the queen of Belgium.

When the railway project was completed, Marcos, who chaired the Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA), saw that the property under the LRT was idle. She decided to lease the land to the PGH Foundation, of which she was president, for the measly sum of P1,000 per sq.m.

"I was only trying to be creative, *wala namang gamit yun. Pero* malversation *daw pala*, corrupt *daw ako* (the land was idle, they said it was malversation, they said I was corrupt)," she said.

Court records, however, showed that the LRTA leased the idle property to the PGHF for P102,000 a month for 25 years.

A few weeks later, Marcos, as president of PGHF, subleased to the private Transnational Construction Corp. (TNCC) the same lot for P734,000 a month, which was P632,000 more than what the PGHF was paying the LRTA.

Her lawyers said the million-peso proceeds from the lease were used to renovate the PGH.

In 1993, the Sandiganbayan convicted Marcos and former Transportation Minister Jose Dans for entering into an unfavorable lease contract with the LRTA, the PGHF and the TNCC.

In January 1998, the Supreme Court third division acquitted Marcos on one charge but upheld her conviction on the second charge, which carried a maximum prison term of 12 years. She was also fined P189 million. Dans was acquitted.

SC acquitted

In October 1998, the Supreme Court en banc acquitted Marcos, overturning her conviction in the only case in which she had been found guilty.

The PGH, however, posted on its website that its renovation was funded with a loan from the Social Security System, not from the Belgian government or from the PGH Foundation that Marcos once headed.

The graft case involving the PGH renovation was filed in the 1980s, one among the more than 500 cases filed against the estimated $10-billion ill-gotten wealth amassed by the Marcoses from 1965 until they were ousted in a bloodless people's revolution in 1986.

Ex-Lacson aide faces 10 years in US prison

From page A1

They maintain that the "serious disruption" he caused to the American government outweighed any benefit he should receive for pleading guilty in the conspiracy.

Prosecutors also said Aquino posed a "danger to the national security, including the foreign relations, of the United States" by attempting to destabilize and overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The plot involved the theft of classified national defense documents from the White House and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Also pleading guilty in the case was Leandro Aragoncillo, a former US Marine who worked as a military aide to Vice Presidents Al Gore and Dick Cheney before becoming an FBI intelligence analyst.

Aragoncillo is to be sentenced Wednesday, also before US District Judge William H. Walls.

Aquino lawyer Mark A. Berman has said his client should be given a prison sentence of less than four years.

AQUINO (above): American prosecutors seek maximum penalty for him for allegedly posing a danger to "national security." ARAGONCILLO: To be sentenced today, July 18.

US veep Dick Cheney

In a court filing last week, Berman said that prosecutors had "gotten into bed" with Aragoncillo "to avoid the politically embarrassing fact that there was a traitor in the Office of the Vice President long before (Aquino) came onto the scene."

Aquino "stands ready to be punished. But he should not be punished for the actions of another," Berman wrote.

Aquino, 41, pleaded guilty in July 2006 in a deal that spared him a life term if convicted of espionage. He admitted possessing secret documents containing information on the United States' confidential intelligence sources and methods, as well as information on terrorist threats to US military personnel in the Philippines.

Recipients of the secret documents in the Philippines included former President Joseph Estrada, who was ousted six years ago, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former House Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella, according to court documents.

Estrada and Lacson have acknowledged receiving information from Aquino or Aragoncillo, but have denied any wrongdoing.

Aquino was once a senior officer serving under Lacson in the PNP. He fled to the United States to escape murder charges in 2001 and lived with his wife and son in New York City. After serving his prison term, he is likely to be deported.

[Aquino fled to the United States after being implicated in the November 2000 murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver.]

He has been in federal custody since he and Aragoncillo were arrested in September 2005.

Aragoncillo, 48, who was a civilian FBI employee based at Fort Monmouth in central New Jersey, pleaded guilty to four charges in May.

The most serious charge, conspiracy to transmit national defense information, can carry the death penalty. But under a plea agreement, Aragoncillo faces 15 to 20 years in prison. He is a naturalized US citizen who was born in the Philippines.

Prosecutors said Aragoncillo, who entered office of the the Vice President in 1999, was recruited in 2000 by the political opposition in the Philippines and began working with Aquino in early 2005.

Aragoncillo admitted passing information to Aquino and opposition politicians who wanted to oust Ms Arroyo.

Extradition

In Manila, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he was hoping that Aquino would be extradited to the Philippines so that he could testify on those involved in his case.

The justice secretary said he expected the Philippine government to use the evidence gathered by the US authorities to pin down Aquino in going after his fellow conspirators.

But Gonzalez said that whether Aquino would be extradited to the Philippines would depend on the US government.

"We still have to study our next actions. We have to check what could be done. Let's wait for what will happen," he said. *Reports from AP and Leila B. Salaverria*

WHAT WENT BEFORE

Dacer murder suspect

MICHAEL RAY AQUINO, A FORMER POLICE senior superintendent, avoided an espionage charge and a possible life sentence by pleading guilty before a US court in July 2006 to unauthorized possession of US defense documents.

Aquino is accused of receiving in 2005 classified documents about Filipino leaders from Leandro Aragoncillo, a Filipino-American who worked as a US Federal Bureau of Investigation agent. Aquino allegedly transmitted 101 of these documents to political enemies of Ms Arroyo.

Aquino admitted to receiving e-mails from Aragoncillo but said he had no way of knowing whether or not the information was classified.

Aquino was arrested in his New York residence on Sept. 10, 2005 for espionage. He was indicted by a federal grand jury on Oct. 6, 2005.

Aquino fled to the United States after being implicated in the November 2000 murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

DENR to employees: Your job or your Friendster

From page A1

they spend hours surfing and chatting way beyond their lunch break. But not at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Undersecretary Jose N. Ferrer Jr. has issued a memorandum reminding employees at the DENR main office to refrain from playing computer games or chatting online during office hours or face sanctions.

"It sends a very wrong message to the public if they see a government employee chatting or playing games instead of being there to serve the public," Ferrer told reporters yesterday.

Neither does it conform to "proper office decorum," he added.

Ferrer received reports that some employees were glued to their computer screens playing games, surfing Friendster, chatting, long after their hourlong lunch break was over.

"They usually play games or chat during lunch break. After their lunch break, some were observed still engrossed in what they were doing. We don't let that go unnoticed," he said.

Ferrer, however, said the situation had not become unmanageable, so he merely issued a "mildly worded" memorandum to some 1,000 employees at the main office last Friday.

Proper work ethic

In the memorandum, the undersecretary for management and technical services said the department wished to remind its employees anew about the proper work ethic.

"There's nothing illegal [about] chatting during the lunch break," he said. "We don't have a problem with the Internet as long as it's used productively."

If they had a lot of free time, employees should request "additional assignments" from supervisors, the official said.

With the memorandum, Ferrer said he expected heads of division and offices in the DENR main building to check on their staff during office hours and to make sure they toed the line.

"Both the officers and staff should be responsible enough to check if that's still happening, and if it continues to happen after this memo," he said.

If an employee is caught committing a "misdemeanor," he gets a written warning, then a reprimand, and then a suspension order, as spelled out in Civil Service rules, according to the official.

Better at solitaire

"For now, we don't want to issue a written warning yet if we could correct [the situation] by relaying our observation to the division head that their staff is getting better at Solitaire," Ferrer said in jest.

The official did not rule out the option of blocking the employees' access to the Internet during office hours.

"We will come to that if employees flagrantly violate this memorandum. That's one of the remedial measures we can take," he said.

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NBI apologizes to broadcaster

Says there's no evidence Korina is recruiter or investor in pyramid scam

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIgation has apologized to broadcaster Korina Sanchez for saying she was an investor in Francswiss, an alleged pyramid scam on the Internet.

Lawyer Ruel Lasala, NBI National Capital Region director, said the bureau issued a "letter of comfort" to Sanchez "whose name was only dragged into the controversy."

"We regret the undue publicity brought to your name in relation to the Francswiss or FS Investment pyramiding scam. Apparently, in view of your popularity and credibility as a media personality, the persons behind the scam were unscrupulously using your good name to entice potential victims into investing in the Internet venture," Lasala said in the July 16 letter to Sanchez.

Based on the NBI's preliminary investigation, Lasala, who met with Sanchez's lawyer on Monday, said there was no basis for linking Sanchez to Francswiss.

"There exists no reason or basis to believe that you have acted for or in behalf of these scam artists. We express our apologies for your apprehensions," the letter said.

Last week, the NBI listed Sanchez among the prominent personalities who put money—a minimum of $1,000—into Francswiss.

Sanchez, who was reported to have invested P15 million, was supposedly recruited by a Jay Heredia, who was a "downline" of Eleazard Castillo, the alleged chief financial adviser of Francswiss who was arrested by the NBI two weeks ago.

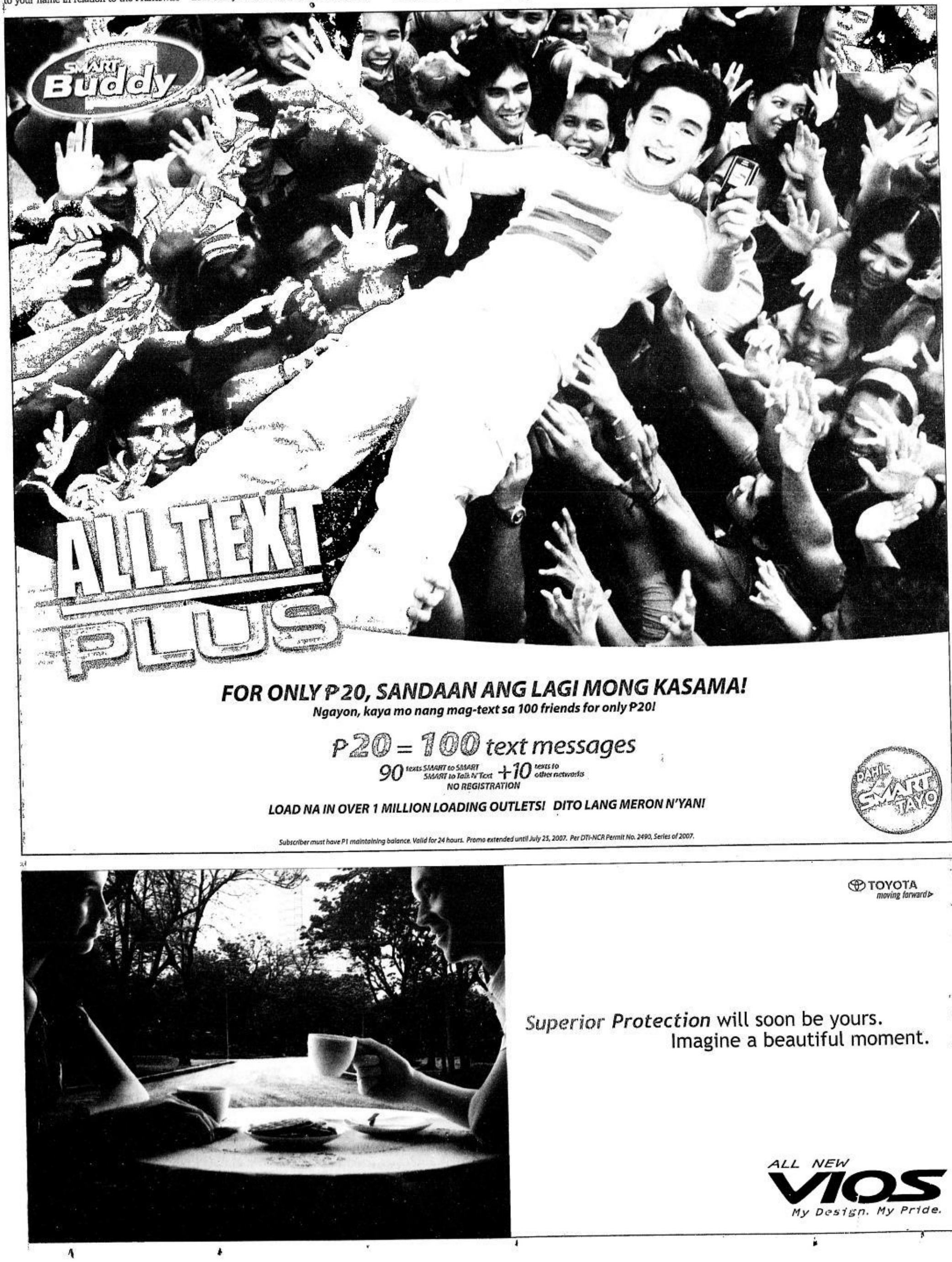
The names of prominent people like Sanchez were used not only to entice investors but to pacify irate victims, the NBI said.

A text message reportedly went out to Francswiss investors last week that read: "FS advisory: To all investors, remain calm. The server will resume anytime. Korina will fix bad publicity as soon as she gets back from the States. We are not violating any law, we are not pyramiding scam because even if we are not recruiting we can get our interests. Francswiss is doing its part for the people."

"It's but fitting and proper to tell the truth that, as of the moment, we found no evidence to prove that she was among the investors or that she recruited people. We suspect her name was only used by those behind Francswiss because of her marketing [pull], she's popular and credible," Lasala said.

He refused to answer directly when asked if Sanchez was off the hook, merely reiterating that the investigation was ongoing.

"Maybe if somebody comes forward and claims that he's an aggrieved party," Lasala said.



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DID YOU KNOW

EQUITABLE PCI Bank merged recently with Banco de Oro. Shareholders of both banks approved the union last December. The Securities and Exchange Commission approved the merger just last month. The bank is now called Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

2 peacemakers die in bid to stop fight

Brothers flee after shooting victims

By Julie M. Aurelio

FOR TRYING TO BREAK UP A fight, two men were shot dead after midnight yesterday on Tramo Street in Pasay City.

Rizalito de Guzman and Reymark Mendiola died on the spot when they were shot in the head by brothers Ramilo and Ramiro Gaa.

Both victims were residents of Marycris Compound in General Trias, Cavite.

The Gaa brothers, who immediately fled after the incident, lived on F. Victor Street in Pasay City.

Investigation showed that the suspects accosted their neighbor, Manuel Ilagan, 34, for reasons still not clear to the police, at around 12:30 a.m. yesterday. Ramilo then pointed a cal. .38 revolver at Ilagan's face and pulled the trigger.

The gun, however, misfired, according to case investigator PO3 Joel Landicho.

At this point, the victims, who were watching the incident from afar, decided to mediate between the Gaa brothers and Ilagan.

De Guzman tried to take away Ramilo's gun but Ramiro took out a gun and shot the former in the head.

He then shot Mendiola in the head and left the scene with his brother, leaving the victims sprawled on the street.

Revillame posts bail for abuse charge

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TELEVISION HOST WILFREDO "WILLIE" Revillame yesterday posted bail in connection with a complaint his wife filed against him last year.

Accompanied by his legal counsel Dexter Lacuanan, Revillame arrived at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 89 at around 9:30 a.m. and posted the P12,000 bail recommended by the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for his temporary liberty.

Assistant City Prosecutor Gibson Araula Jr., in a resolution issued earlier this month, found probable cause in the criminal complaint filed against Revillame by his wife, Floralice "Liz" Almoro, who accused him of displaying violent behavior toward her and their son.

Araula said the evidence on record was "sufficient to indict Revillame" for violating Republic Act No. 9262, or the law protecting women and children from violence.

Lacuanan said Revillame's team of lawyers, which also includes Raymond Fortun and Armando Marcelo, would meet within the week to discuss their next possible course of action. "One of the options being considered is the filing of a petition for review," said Lacuanan.

Affected

He added that while Revillame was affected by recent developments in the case, "he has come to terms with what has happened. he has accepted the inevitability that he has to confront the case," Lacuanan said.

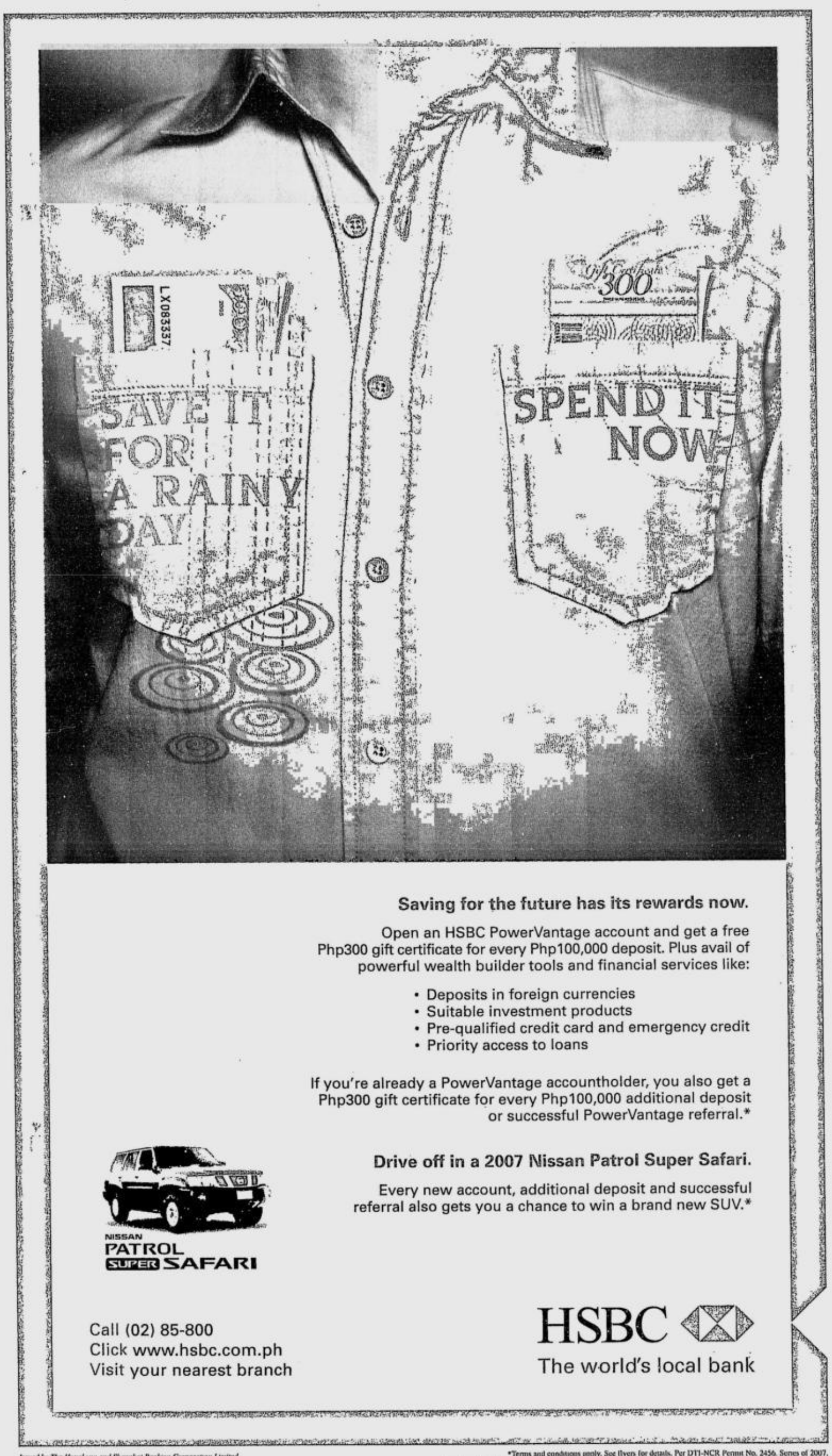
The lawyer added that Revillame and his wife have not spoken to each other since their separation. "I cannot give further comments on their personal lives because these are intricately connected to the civil case which is covered by a gag order," Lacuanan said.

Revillame's lawyer said the "Wowowee" host has been drawing strength from supporters and ABS-CBN, producer of the game show.

In a complaint filed in October 2006, Almoro charged Revillame with threatening to hurt her and their son during one of their fights. On Aug. 6, she said her husband swore at her when she asked him what was wrong. The incident happened inside their house in Ayala Heights, Quezon City, she added.

Almoro claimed Revillame also threw his arms about, hitting their son. At one point, he grabbed the boy and then threatened to hurt her before he calmed down and left. Araula noted in his resolution that one of the incidents was witnessed by actress Maricel Laxa, who executed a sworn statement to substantiate Almoro's allegation.

Revillame had denied the charges, stressing that he was an "exemplary husband and a provider," despite Almoro's "explosive moods and hurtful tirades."



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PNP bucks Palao murder trial transfer to Cebu

By Kristine L. Alave

MEMBERS OF THE ANTI-ILLEGAL DRUGS Special Operations Task Force (AIDSOTF) of the Philippine National Police and prosecutors handling the cases against alleged drug lord Amin Iman Boratong have expressed disappointment over the Supreme Court Third Division's ruling to transfer the murder trial of Samer Palao, their main witness against Boratong, from Manila to Cebu City.

AIDSOTF lawyer Roque Merdegia said they would file a comment in the Third Division opposing the transfer.

He noted that the ruling contradicts a previous decision by the court en banc to assign the trial—originally set in Cagayan de Oro City—to the Manila Regional Trial Court. Prosecutors also said the ruling would delay the cases against Boratong and his wife Memie in the Pasig City Regional Trial Court. It would also be a logistical nightmare if the courts repeatedly recall Palao to testify against Boratong, they added.

Boratong, who is accused of maintaining the 2,000-sq m shabu market in Pasig City that was raided by members of the PNP-AIDSOTF in February 2006, is being tried on illegal drug charges at the Pasig City RTC.

Palao claims he was Boratong's right hand man in the shabu market operations.

State prosecutors recently filed murder charges against the Boratongs and their henchmen in another Pasig City court for the alleged murder of television network GMA 7 informant German Colisao in 2005. The hearing for the case has yet to start.

In a June 25 resolution, the Supreme Court Third Division ordered the transfer of Palao's murder trial in Manila to Cebu City after the defense demanded a transfer of venue as the alleged crime was committed far from Manila. The charge was filed last year by Memie Boratong's family who claimed that Palao kidnapped and killed Memie's brother.

The PNP-AIDSOTF had also opposed the transfer of Palao's trial to Cagayan de Oro, saying they received reports that his life would be in danger if he sets foot in Mindanao, where they claim the Boratongs wield some degree of influence.

PROTESTERS hold a rally near Mendiola, one of the first to be held in the area, after Mayor Alfredo Lim declared it open to militant groups. RYAN LIM

3 men nabbed in QC drug bust ordered released

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE FORMER MAYOR OF A TOWN IN ABRA province and his two companions who were arrested in a drug bust last month were set free yesterday after a Quezon City judge granted their petition for habeas corpus.

Judge Ralph Lee of the QC Regional Trial Court Branch 83 ordered the release of former Bucloc Mayor Mailed Molina, his driver Ricardo Verzoza and businessman Ritchie Watanabe after granting their petition against District Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operation Task Group (DAID-SOTG) head Supt. Ferdinan Ampil and Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (CIDU) head Supt. Franklin Moises.

Court records showed that operatives of the CIDU and DAID-SOTG arrested the three on June 13 in a drug bust conducted at the Inn Café, Fersal Apartelle on Kalayaan Avenue, Quezon City.

Police reported that they were able to seize two bricks of marijuana weighing 943.8 grams, seven transparent plastic bags containing marijuana hashish fruiting tops weighing 142.5 grams, an Armalite rifle, and a cal. .45 pistol from Molina and his companions.

During the inquest proceedings held at the Department of Justice last June 15, the petitioners availed themselves of their statutory right to a preliminary investigation and voluntarily waived their rights under Article 125 of the Revised Penal Code.

Records showed that the petitioners then filed their respective counter-affidavits within the period given to them by the investigating prosecutor.

Earlier this month, the DOJ dismissed the charges of drug possession and illegal possession of firearms against the three "due to insufficiency of evidence."

Despite the DOJ decision, however, the three said that the respondent police officers refused to release them from detention in Camp Karingal, Quezon City, prompting them to file a a petition for habeas corpus.

In granting the petition of Molina and his companions, Lee ruled that there was "no further legal basis for the continued detention of the three petitioners considering that there was no information yet filed in any court against them, no warrant of arrest issued in their names, and the preliminary investigation was already terminated by the issuance of a resolution dated July 6, 2007 dismissing the charges against them."

METROBRIEFS

Man dies in accidental shooting

A SECURITY guard in Quezon City was killed on Monday night with his own service firearm which accidentally went off while his coworker was playing with it. Boniver Silaya, 21, of the Binuya Security Agency, was declared dead on arrival at the UERM Hospital after he was shot once in the chest. His 23-year-old co-employee, Alfie Rackman, a stay-in helper at 50 Tomas Arguelles St. in Barangay Santol, was arrested after the incident. According to the police, Silaya left his cal. .38 caliber service revolver in Rackman's care when he went to a nearby store to buy cigarettes. Rackman allegedly played around with the gun but it accidentally went off, hitting the victim in the chest. Silaya was rushed to the nearest hospital but he died later on. Rackman, on the other hand, was placed in the custody of the police who will file homicide charges against him.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Motorcycle driver killed

A MAN was killed and his companion was seriously injured when their motorcycle slammed into a large concrete flower pot just after midnight in Pasig City yesterday. Police identified the dead victim as Rommel Alvarez, 20, a contractual worker and a resident of Nagpayong, Barangay Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City. His companion, Eljun Malbacias, 20, and a resident of the same village, was taken to the Pasig City General Hospital. According to the police report, Alvarez was driving a motorcycle, with Malbacias riding behind him, on Sandoval Avenue, in Barangay Pinagbuhatan when the accident occurred at about 12:20 a.m. The report noted that Alvarez tried to overtake a van but lost control of the bike. Police said the victim was driving too fast and swerved into a curb, where he crashed into a large, concrete flower pot. Alvarez died on the spot while Malbacias sustained injuries and was taken to the nearest hospital.

Kristine L. Alave

Lim to pick new MPD chief

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim might pick from a list of police officers to be submitted by the Philippine National Police the next head of the Manila Police District. Lim was quick to add yesterday, however, that he was satisfied with the performance of acting MPD chief Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa. "PNP chief Director General Oscar Calderon said he will submit names for my consideration. I would be the one to choose," Lim said. "But so far, Colonel Abarzosa is doing okay."

Tina G. Santos

Lim to study Mendiola exclusion as rally site

By Tina G. Santos

"I'LL THINK ABOUT IT."

This was Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim's response yesterday to Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Calderon who asked him the other day to reconsider his decision to reopen the Don Chino Roces Bridge (Mendiola Bridge) to demonstrators.

"I'll study his proposal," said Lim, referring to Calderon's suggestion to exclude Mendiola from the list of approved rally sites.

Citing security concerns, Calderon earlier said militant groups had other venues for staging protests such as Liwasang Bonifacio and other freedom parks in the city.

According to the PNP chief, Mendiola was a very sensitive and very critical area since it was the site of several schools as well as the gateway to Malacañang.

Lim, however, seemed noncommittal. "So far, rallies in Mendiola for the past two Sundays were peaceful, there was no problem." he said.

"They were probably concerned that there would be trouble, but the police and Presidential Security Group are there," Lim added.

When he won as mayor in May, Lim vowed to reopen Mendiola Bridge to protesters after it was declared a no-rally zone by his predecessor, Lito Atienza.

Lim, however, later limited the holding of rallies in the area to weekends.

Suspect in reporter's slay attempt nabbed

By Tina G. Santos, Nancy C. Carvajal

MANILA POLICEMEN YESTERDAY ARRESTED arrested the suspect in the shooting of a tabloid reporter-photographer in Valenzuela City last year.

Jeorge Tabora de Jesus alias Boy Demonyo was arrested in a karaoke bar in Ermita, Manila, said Supt. Reynaldo Orante, head of the Northern Police District intelligence unit.

De Jesus was being sought for allegedly shooting Roger Panizal, 52, a photojournalist for Bagong Tiktik on Aug. 14 at Sta. Juliana Street, Malinta, Valenzuela City.

Panizal sustained several gunshot wounds but survived the attack. He later identified his attacker as De Jesus, saying he could not forget the mole on the right side of the suspect's face. De Jesus however, refused to say why he shot Panizal, and was later turned over to the police for further investigation.

Taytay wants to join big league, aims for cityhood

By Kristine L. Alave

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF Taytay, Rizal, has kicked off its bid to become a city in the province that has become an extension of Metro Manila.

Taytay Mayor Joric Gacula recently appointed his head executive assistant, Billy Ines, to head the committee on cityhood.

Local officials want to reclassify its status from a highly industrialized municipality to component city. The mayor explained that the town has been getting investments from major firms like SM Prime Investments Inc. and call center agencies because of its proximity to Manila.

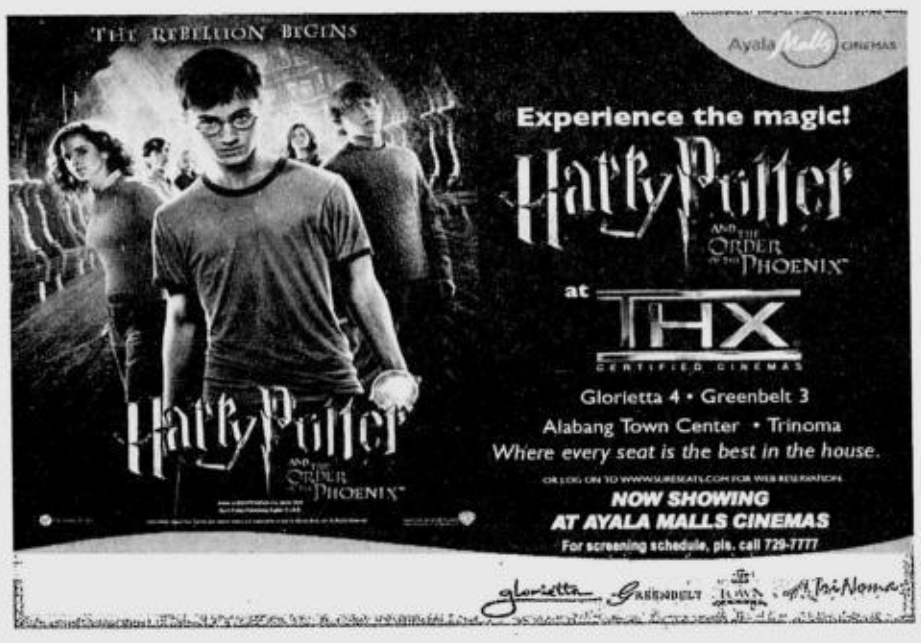
The cityhood committee was tasked to oversee the pros and cons of becoming a component city, validate whether or not the municipality is "ripe" for cityhood and to get the sentiments of residents and businessmen regarding the proposal.

Gacula said the municipal government is verifying and working on the requirements for cityhood as stipulated in the Local Government Code.

He noted that they are aiming to boost the town revenues to P240 million this year, P6 million more than what it earned in 2006.

Gacula promised his constituents that he would impose a moratorium on tax hikes should Taytay become a city to maintain and encourage growth among businesses in the area.

Taytay is classified as a first class municipality, with a land area of 3,374-ha and a population of nearly 200,000 people.



Mike Arroyo case vs Jinggoy junked

By Julie M. Aurelio

A PASAY CITY COURT HAS GRANTED the motion of Jose Miguel Arroyo, husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, to withdraw the P10 million libel suit he filed against Sen. Jinggoy Estrada last year.

Judge Wilhemina Jorge-Wagan of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 111 last week ordered the dismissal of the case a month after Arroyo moved to withdraw the charges he filed against the senator who had linked him to an alleged smuggler.

In an order dated July 12, the judge pointed out that Estrada had yet to be arraigned while the prosecution would have a hard time proving the charges without Arroyo's cooperation.

"Considering that accused (Estrada) has not yet been arraigned as this court has not yet acquired jurisdiction over his person, and the difficulty of the prosecution to prove the guilt of accused without the active cooperation of the private complainant (Arroyo), the motion (to drop the charges) is granted," Wagan said.

In April, after recovering from a delicate heart operation, Arroyo announced that he would withdraw all the libel cases he filed against journalists and personalities whom he had accused of maligning his reputation.

On June 6, he filed an affidavit of desistance asking the Pasay court to drop the libel charges he filed against Estrada.

According to Arroyo, he has decided to forgive those who caused him pain after being given a new lease on life.

However, Estrada failed to comment on the affidavit of desistance and the motion to withdraw filed by Arroyo's camp despite a court order giving him 15 days to do so.

In March 2006, Arroyo sued Estrada for libel after the latter claimed that Vicky Toh, whom he said had a special relationship with the President's husband, was associated with alleged big-time smuggler, Samuel Lee.

The senator was almost arrested a few months later if not for the intervention of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

In a memorandum to Pasay City Prosecutor Elmer Mitra in August 2006, Gonzalez said Estrada "enjoys parliamentary immunity from arrest for offenses punishable by not more than six years imprisonment."

The other day, a Quezon City judge also junked a libel case Arroyo filed against journalist Ramon Tulfo and his brothers, Raffy and Erwin, after the President's husband expressed disinterest in pursuing the case.

WORLDBRIEFS

Death for slavery

BEIJING—One man in China was sentenced to death on Tuesday and 28 people were handed jail terms in the first verdicts over a slavery scandal that shocked the nation, a judge said. Zhao Yanbing, a brickyard employee who confessed on national television to killing a mentally handicapped slave, was given the death penalty, High Court judge Liu Jimin said. The others got prison terms ranging from two years to life. The scandal surfaced last month after about 400 distraught parents posted a plea on the Internet about their children, who had been sold into slavery in China's northern Shanxi province and neighboring Henan. Officials say 576 enslaved workers have since been rescued, but the true number of victims is widely believed to be far higher. *AFP*

Nuke shutdown confirmed

SEOUL—The UN's nuclear watchdog confirmed Monday that North Korea has shut the reactor which produces bomb-making plutonium but the chief US negotiator forecast problems persuading Pyongyang to totally abandon its nuclear ambitions. "Our inspectors are there. They verified the shutting down of the reactor yesterday," International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) head Mohamed ElBaradei said in Bangkok. "It's a good step in the right direction." The North announced Sunday it had closed the Yongbyon complex, its first step since 2002 toward ending a program which culminated in an atomic bomb test last October. *AFP*

$190M Palestinian aid

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Monday will offer new support for the Fatah-led government of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, marking a higher profile effort to resolve the Middle East conflict. Bush will announce $190 million in new aid to the Abbas government, US officials said. He will reaffirm his vision of a Palestinian state at peace with Israel and call for a meeting this autumn to discuss ways to get the peace talks back on track. After the violent takeover last month of the Gaza Strip by the Palestinian militant group Hamas, Western countries have rallied behind Abbas with promises of renewed aid. *Reuters*

Libya defers ruling on nurses

TRIPOLI—Libya's top judiciary body has postponed until Monday evening its meeting to decide the fate of six foreign medics sentenced to death for infecting Libyan children with the AIDS virus, officials and lawyers said. Government officials also confirmed the postponement but neither they nor the lawyers gave an explanation. Five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor were imprisoned in Libya eight years ago and sentenced to die for infecting 426 Libyan children with the virus that causes AIDS while working at a children's hospital in the city of Benghazi. *Reuters*

SPY MURDER ROW

Britain expels Russian diplomats

LONDON—BRITAIN ORDERED THE expulsion of four Russian diplomats on Monday over Moscow's refusal to hand over the main suspect in the murder of ex-KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko, further escalating tension between Russia and the West.

Russia said the decision was "immoral," would prompt retaliation, and could only "entail the most serious consequences for Russian-British relations," according to a foreign ministry spokesperson.

Aside from the expulsions—the first since 1996—Britain said it would make it harder for Russian officials to come to the country, review cooperation on other issues and warned the case could harm Russian ties with the European Union as a whole.

"This is a situation the government has not sought and does not welcome. But we have no choice but to address it," British Foreign Secretary David Miliband told parliament.

British prosecutors want to charge former Russian state security agent Andrei Lugovoy with the murder of Litvinenko, who died an agonizing death in a London hospital after ingesting a lethal dose of the rare radioactive isotope polonium 210.

Russia has rejected Britain's request to hand over Lugovoy, saying its constitution does not allow extraditions. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the demand is politically motivated.

"We have chosen to expel four diplomats—four particular diplomats—in order to send a clear and proportionate signal to the Russian government about the seriousness of this case," said Miliband, adding he was grateful for strong EU support.

"We will discuss with partners the need for future EU-Russia engagement to take our concerns on this case into account." Relations between Russia and the West have deteriorated with both Washington and the European Union at loggerheads with Moscow over issues ranging from missile defense and energy policies to the future of Serbia's Kosovo province.

Interfax news agency quoted an "informed source in Moscow"—a traditional reference to high-level leaks—as saying the Russian response would not necessarily be tit-for-tat.

"This is not our principle," said the source. "It would bring us back to the days of the Cold War. It's a shame that some have this principle entrenched deep in their minds."

Analysts echoed this sentiment, saying that while the British expulsions would provoke a robust response from Russia, they did not expect the row to escalate too far as it might harm commercial ties.

"I don't think they'll do anything that will jeopardize that," said Derek Averre, Russia specialist at Birmingham University. "There won't be a massive kind of escalation because it's simply not in Moscow's interests."

Moscow has dismissed as ridiculous Litvinenko's deathbed accusation that Putin ordered his killing. *Reuters*

Triple bomb blasts kill over 80 in Kirkuk, Iraq

BAGHDAD—A TRIPLE BOMBING, INCLUDING a massive suicide truck blast, killed more than 80 people in Kirkuk, the deadliest attack yet in the oil-rich northern city. The bloodshed reinforced concern that extremists are heading north as US-led forces step up pressure around Baghdad.

The vast majority of the casualties came in Monday's truck bombing, which blasted a nine-meter-deep crater and damaged part of the roof of the headquarters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the party of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani. The explosion took place in a crowded commercial area and appeared aimed at causing as many civilian deaths as possible.

Saman Ahmed, 35, said he was driving along the street when the blast "pushed other vehicles toward my car along with fire and shrapnel like a flood."

"The glass from my car and the other cars went into my face," he said from his hospital bed. "Now I cannot hear well because of the sound of the explosion. I saw tens of dead bodies lying on the ground."

Kirkuk, 290 km north of Baghdad, is a center of tensions among Arabs, Turkomen and Kurds, who want to include the area in the autonomous Kurdish region of the north.

With three ethnic groups competing for control, violence in Kirkuk has been frequent. But Monday's blasts were on a far bigger scale than most attacks.

After the truck bombing, rescuers scrambled through the smoke and the debris lifting bloodied and broken bodies onto stretchers. The force of the blast ripped clothing off some victims.

At least 10 shops were damaged, as was part of the fence at nearby Kirkuk Castle, a historic fortress that is one of the city's most prominent landmarks. The street was strewn with blackened husks of two dozen cars.

The blast killed at least 80 people and wounded more than 183, according to police Brig. Burhan Tayeb Taha. At least 10 of the victims were incinerated inside a bus that was engulfed by a ball of fire.

Twenty minutes later, a car bomb exploded about 640 m away in the Haseer outdoor market, frequented by Kurds, Kirkuk police chief Maj. Gen. Jamal Tahir said. The market was largely empty after the first attack, and the explosion caused several injuries.

Hours later, a car bomb exploded in the Domiz region of southern Kirkuk, killing a police officer and wounding six other policemen, according to Tahir.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki condemned the Kirkuk blasts as a "cowardly act" by "terrorists" who intentionally targeted "innocent people." *AP*

ONLOOKERS stand atop the crater left behind when a suicide bomber detonated a truck wired with explosives near a Kurdish political party's offices, followed by two other car bomb blasts, in the northern city of Kirkuk 290 km north of Baghdad, Iraq, on July 16. AP

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE POWER SUPPLY CONTRACT ENTERED INTO BETWEEN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. AND KEPCO-SALCON POWER CORPORATION

ERC CASE NO. 2007-130 RC

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (NOCECO) AND KEPCO-SALCON CORPORATION (KSPC),

Applicants
x----------x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on June 29, 2007, Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative, Inc (NOCECO) and KEPCO-Salcon Power Corporation (KSPC) filed an application for the approval of their power supply contract.

In the said application, NOCECO and KSPC, alleged, among others, that:

1. In order to address the looming power shortage in the Visayas, the National Power Corporation ("NPC"), Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation ("PSALM"), KEPCO Philippines Corporation ("KEPHILCO"), Salcon Power Corporation ("SPC") and the National Transmission Corporation ("TransCo"), executed a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") dated 18 August 2006 which provides that KEPHILCO and SPC will build a 2x100 MW Circulating Fluidized Bed Combustor Boiler Coal-Fired base load power plant (the "New Naga Coal Plant") in Naga, Cebu. The New Naga Coal Plant is expected to meet the growing power needs of the Visayas area and to provide a stable and reliable supply.
2. KEPHILCO and SPC thereafter incorporated KSPC as the joint venture entity which shall undertake the construction, ownership, operation, management and maintenance of the New Naga Coal Plant.
3. NPC and KSPC subsequently executed a Joint Sales Agreement ("JSA") dated 16 November 2006, which outlines the various duties and obligations of NPC and KSPC relative to the construction and continued operation of the New Naga Coal Plant. KSPC and NPC shall execute an Implementing Agreement to further delineate the duties and obligations of NPC and KSPC found in the JSA.
   3.1 Under the JSA, NPC shall market the electricity to be generated from the New Naga Coal Plant and secure firm commitments from several Distribution Utilities ("DU") for the supply of such electricity. KSPC shall have the duty to construct the plant.
   3.2 KSPC will enter into such number of Power Sales Contracts with the DUs as will allow the New Naga Coal Plant to operate at 80% plant factor. KSPC shall supply the base load contract quantities of the DUs and shall source from NPC the balance of the contract quantities at an average time-of-use rate ("TOU") of P4.30/kWh, subject to adjustments, for a period of ten years.
4. Pursuant to the JSA, on 24 May 2007, KSPC and NOCECO executed the Power Sales Contract ("PSC") subject of the instant application.
5. Under the PSA, KSPC shall supply NOCECO a total Contract Quantity of 140,668,397 kWh a year. Of such quantity, KSPC shall supply NOCECO's base load contract quantity in kWh ("KSPC Contract Quantity") through electricity generated by the New Naga Coal Plant to be constructed by KSPC. KSPC shall source the balance of the total Contract Quantity from NPC ("NPC Contract Quantity"), including the necessary peaking power.
6. **Salient features of the PSC.** KSPC shall construct, own, operate, manage and maintain a 2x100 MW Circulating Fluidized Bed Combustor (CFBC) Boiler Coal-Fixed base load power plant in the Municipality of Naga, Cebu (the "Project"), to supply power under the PSC and other similar contracts under the JSA.
   a. **Term.** The PSC has a term commencing on the date of its effectivity and expiring after ten (10) years from the commencement of commercial operations of the second unit of the New Naga Coal Plant.
   b. **Volume.** The contracted volume shall at least meet NOCECO's 2006 kWh consumption level. The annual Contract Quantity is 140,668,397 kWh, comprising of the KSPC Contract Quantity of 87,600,000 kWh and the NPC Contract Quantity of 53,068,397 kWh.
   c. **Sale and purchase of power.** The sale and purchase of the KSPC Contract Quantity shall be at a rate of P4.30/kWh (the "KSPC Base Price") subject to indexation on foreign exchange rates, fuel prices, local and international price indices. The sale and purchase of the NPC Contract Quantity shall be at average TOU rates of P4.30/kWh subject to indexation on foreign exchange rates, fuel prices, local and international price indices. There shall be annual nomination and reconciliation of the Contract Quantities.
   d. **WESM Membership.** The PSC requires NOCECO to become a direct member of the WESM. The market fees due to WESM shall be a pass-through cost to be shouldered by NOCECO.
7. **Long Run Avoidable Cost Pricing Methodology.** The pricing in the PSC uses the Long Run Avoidable Cost ("LRAC") methodology. The LRAC methodology is based on the notion of putting up a new plant where efficiencies are embedded. LRAC is guided by the Best New Entrant ("BNE") concept of a new and efficient generating plant entering the market.
   7.1 **The average LRAC.** The average LRAC rate is the sum of the weighted average return on capital, fixed operating and maintenance costs, fuel costs, and variable operating and maintenance costs of a BNE, divided by the number of kilowatt-hours generated.
   7.2 **The rationale behind LRAC.** LRAC benchmark rates ensure that offered rates are long-run oriented and are the most cost-competitive in comparison to other new entrants in the future. The rates are market-influenced and thus cheaper.
   7.3 **ERC adoption of LRAC.** In the Order dated 29 September 2003 in ERC Case No. 2003-291, the Commission adopted the LRAC methodology, to wit:

   "The determination of the LRAC components will be through the Best New Entrant (BNE) standard (based in viable plant mix), whereby the revenue requirements shall be based on the LRAC of the BNE reflecting the lowest total cost of an efficient new entrant generating plant in the country. The LRAC Methodology promotes efficiency in capital cost management while ensuring that the electricity remains viable for the longer term.

   x x x

   After thorough evaluation and analysis of the application and pursuant to Section 4 of the Rule 3 of the IRR of RA 9136, NPC and PSALM are hereby granted a provisional authority to impose revised generation charges using the LRAC methodology for the Luzon, Visayas and Panay/Bohol Grids."
8. **Sources of Funds/Financial Plans.** KSPC will obtain a debt facility from international lending institutions and/or other commercial banks. The equity investment will be sourced from KEPHILCO and SPC.
   8.1 **Project Cost.** The project cost is estimated at US$416,479,000.00, the components of which are as follows:

Cost Components	Amount in US$ (000)	Description
Hard Cost		
EPC	272,314	Cost of engineering, design, procurement, and construction.
EVAT	32,678	Import and Input VAT
Contingency	10,893	4% of EPC Cost
Owner's Cost	24,148	Expenses during construction period, incl payroll, office equipment, rent, commissioning and start-up, etc
Land Lease	4,104	Land lease for plant site.
Sub Total	344,136	
Soft Cost		
IDC and Financing Fees	53,129	Capitalized interest during construction and financing fees
Financing Exp & Advisor's Fees	7,905	Legal, technical, and financial advisory fees and DST and mortgage registration
Insurance	2,557	Owner-provided insurance during construction
Escalation	2,332	Certain cost subject to inflation (3.4%/annum)
Working Capital	6,421	Initial working capital estimated 2 months of O&M and fuel cost
Sub Total	72,343	
Total Project Cost	416,479	

   8.2 **Debt/Equity Ratio.** The debt-equity ratio for the Project shall be 70:30. Seventy percent (70%) of the total Project cost will be sourced from lenders.

   The preliminary financing plant is as follows

Facility	Amount in US$ (000)	%
Equity Contribution	124,944	30.0%
ECA Loan Tranche A	225,000	54.0%
ECA Clean Tail Tranche B	11,250	2.7%
CP Bank Loan Tranche C	55,285	13.3%
Total	416,479	100.0%

   The balance of thirty percent (30%) will be sourced through capital from KEPHILCO and SPC. KEPHILCO shall invest US$74,966,400 or 60% of the equity. SPC shall contribute US$49,977,600 or 40%. The Project shall be financed through project financing. In the event that project financing may not be availed of, Korea Electric Power Corp. ("KEPCO"), the parent company of KEPHILCO, may extend corporate financing subject to a guarantee fee equivalent to 2.5% of the amount financed.

   8.3 **Annual Interest.** The breakdown of interests for the different loans are as follows

Facility	Total In US$ (000)	Annual In US$ (000)	Years
ECA Loan Tranche A	125,810	10,484	12
ECA Clean Tail Tranche B	7,108	592	12
CP Bank Loan Tranche C	12,116	3,029	4
Total	145,033	14,105	

   8.4. **Computation of Return on Investment/ Weighted Average Cost of Capital.** The average Return on Investment ("ROI") is 14.8% and the Weighted Average Cost of Capital ("WACC") is 14.56%. The WACC is used for the computation of the Long-Run Avoidable Cost ("LRAC") is 14.56%. The WACC is used for the computation of the Long-Run Avoidable Cost ("LRAC").
9. **Purchased Power Rate.** Under the PSC, NOCECO shall pay KSPC a generation charge calculated by applying the KSPC Base Price of P4.30/kWh to the KSPC Contract Quantity and the NPC TOU Rates, which shall be at an average of P4.30/kWh, to the NPC Contract Quantity, exclusive of VAT, other applicable taxes, fees and charges. The fee formulae of the PSC are as follows:

$$GC_{month} = K + N + R + AE$$

GC_{month} = the generation charge or Monthly Payment;
K = KSPC Generation Charge for the month;
N = NPC Generation Charge for the month;
R = Replacement Power Charge for the month;
AE = Alternate Energy Charge for the month;

$$K = \sum_{k=26}^{n25} \sum_{j=1}^{24} \left((KHCQ_{kj} - RPQ_{kj} \times \alpha - AEQ_{kj} \times \beta) \times P_K \right) \times K_{adj}$$

Where:
$KHCQ_k$ = KSPC HCQ for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
RPQ_k = Replacement Power for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
AEQ_k = Alternate Energy for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
P_K = KSPC Price, P/kWh
K_{adj} = KSPC Price adjustment for the month
$n25$ = means up to the 25th day of the current month
k = represents the relevant day of the Billing Month
j = represents the relevant hour of the trading day

$$\sum_{k=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{24} RPQ_{kj} \le \text{Planned Outage, then } \alpha = 1$$

$$\sum_{k=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{24} RPQ_{kj} > \text{Planned Outage, then } \alpha = 0$$

Where:
k = represents the relevant day of the contract year
j = represents the relevant hour of the trading day

And

$$\sum_{k=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{24} AEQ_{kj} \le \text{Allowed Forced Outage, then } \beta = 1$$

$$\sum_{k=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{24} AEQ_{kj} > \text{Allowed Forced Outage, then } \beta = 0$$

$$N = \sum_{k=26}^{n25} \sum_{j=1}^{24} (NHCQ_{kj} \times P_N) \times N_{adj}$$

Where:
$NHCQ_k$ = NPC HCQ for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
P_N = NPC TOU Rate, P/kWh
N_{adj} = NPC Price adjustment for the month

$$R = \sum_{k=26}^{n25} \sum_{j=1}^{24} (RPQ_{kj} \times \alpha \times P_R) \times N_{adj}$$

Where
RPQ_k = Replacement Power for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
P_R = Replacement Power TOU Rate, P/kWh
N_{adj} = NPC Price adjustment for the month

$$AE = \sum_{k=26}^{n25} \sum_{j=1}^{24} (AEQ_{kj} \times \beta \times LMP_{GN})$$

Where:
AEQ_k = Alternate Energy for the relevant day k and relevant hour j of the Billing Month, kW
LMP_{GN} = locational marginal price at generator node, P/kWh

10. The KSPC Base price and the NPC price shall be subject to adjustments based on fuel cost foreign exchange and local and foreign consumer price indices

RATE IMPLICATIONS OF THE POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENT

The following table shows impact of the PSC on the generation rates paid by NOCECO once the New Naga Coal Plant commences commercial operations:

GENCO CHARGES	Current NPC Rate (as of May 2007)	NPC Filing in 2004	Proposed KSPC Rate (by 2010)
BILLING PARTICULARS	Rate, P/kWh	Rate, P/kWh	Rate, P/kWh
I. Generation Charge			
1. Generation Charge - TOU Energy	2.9124		4.30
2. Franchise & Benefits to Host	0.0177		0
Communities Taxes (FBHC), P/kWh			
II. Deferred Accounting Adjustments (DAA)			
1a 7th GRAM DAA	0.0157		0
1b 6th ICERA DAA	0.1679		0
Total Amount before VAT	3.1137	4.5887	4.3000
III. 12% VAT of Non-renewable Energy Gen Charge	0.0009		0.516
Renewable Energy Mix 83.69%			
Non-renewable energy mix - 16.31%			
10% VAT of VATable GRAM and ICERA	0.01836		0
Total Monthly Power Rate	3.1930		4.8160

11. It will be noted that the NPC generation rate indicated in the above table is the current or 2007 rate. On the other hand, the proposed KSPC price will apply beginning 2010. In comparing the above rates, the expected increase in the cost of generation from 2007 to 2010 must be considered.
12. The KSPC Base Price of P4.30/kWh is subject to adjustments based on fuel cost, foreign exchange and local and foreign consumer price indices. The said price was derived using the LRAC method, wherein the capital equipment and fuel supply underwent international competitive selection. For the above computation, the reference fuel price used is US$31.12/MT and the reference foreign exchange rate is P50/1US$.
13. Under the PSC, the said price, NOCECO shall pay a generation charge calculated by applying NPC TOU rates, which shall be at an average of P4.30/kWh
14. More importantly, most of the NPC plants providing the present supply are already beyond their useful life of twenty five (25) years and are deteriorating. Power supply conditions in the Visayas area will reach a critical level as early as 2008. The New Naga Coal Power Plant will greatly alleviate a supply shortage by providing much needed stable and adequate supply of electricity

The Commission has set the application for initial hearing, pre-trial conference, and evidentiary hearing on the following dates:

DATE, TIME & VENUE	PARTICULARS
1. July 30, 2007 (Monday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 P.M.) at the NOCECO Conference Hall, Kabankalan, Negros Occidental	1. Jurisdictional hearing, pre-trial conference and expository presentation
2. July 31, 2007 (Tuesday) at nine o'clock in the morning (9:00 A.M.) at the same venue.	2. Evidentiary Hearing (Reception of evidence and presentation of witnesses)

All persons who have an interest in the subject matter of the proceeding may become a party by filing, at least five (5) days prior to the initial hearing and subject to the requirements in the ERC's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a verified petition with the Commission giving the docket number and title of the proceeding and stating: (1) the petitioner's name and address; (2) the nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding, and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding, and (3) a statement of the relief desired.

All other persons who may want their views known to the Commission with respect to the subject matter of the proceeding may file their opposition to the application or comment thereon at any stage of the proceeding before the applicants conclude the presentation of its evidence. No particular form of opposition or comment is required, but the document, letter of writing should contain the name and address of such person and a concise statement of the opposition or comment and the grounds relied upon.

All such persons who may wish to have a copy of the application may request the applicants, prior to the date of the initial hearing, that they be furnished with a copy of the application. The applicants are hereby directed to furnish all those making such request with copies of the application and its attachments, subject to reimbursement of reasonable photocopying costs. Likewise, any such person may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable Chairman, RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR., and the Honorable Commissioners, ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN, MARIA TERESA A.R. CASTAÑEDA, and JOSE C. REYES, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 5th day of July, 2007 at Pasig City

(Sgd.) FRANCIS SATURNINO C. JUAN
Executive Director III

(PDI--July 12 & 18, 2007)

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Japan quake triggers leaks at nuke plant

KASHIWAZAKI—A POWERFUL EARTHQUAKE TIPPED OVER BARrels of nuclear waste at a power plant in northern Japan, and officials Tuesday were investigating whether there were any radioactive leaks as thousands of quake survivors crowded shelters.

The death toll stood at nine a day after the 6.8-magnitude quake. One person was missing and another 13,000 rendered homeless, as rescue workers rushed to locate any survivors in the rubble—amid fears of landslides—and to restore severed utilities.

The quake caused a leak of water with radioactive material on Monday at the world's largest nuclear power plant at Kashiwazaki city, near the epicenter, although officials said the leak caused no harm to the environment.

On Tuesday, officials were investigating a possible second leak, saying about 100 stacked drums containing low-level nuclear waste fell at the plant during the quake and were found a day later, some of the lids open, said Masahide Ichikawa, an official with the local government in Niigata prefecture.

Tokyo Electric Power Co., company running the plant, was still trying to determine whether any hazardous material had spilled, he said, citing a report by the company.

Kensuke Takeuchi, a spokesperson at the Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear power plant, confirmed that barrels of low-level nuclear waste had tipped over. But he could not give further details, such as whether there had been a leak.

"We're currently investigating the situation and plan to deal with it as smoothly as possible," Takeuchi said, while refusing to offer further comment.

A different spokesperson, Manabu Takeyama, said "at this point in time, there is no danger of grave effects on the environment or human health from the plant."

Another leak at the Kashiwazaki power plant would sow further doubts about the safety of Japan's nuclear power plants, which have suffered a string of accidents and cover-ups amid deep concerns they are vulnerable in earthquakes.

Monday's quake initially triggered a small fire at an electrical transformer in the sprawling plant. But it was announced only 12 hours later that the temblor also caused a leak of water containing radioactive material.

Officials said the water leak was harmless and well below safety standards, but the delay in notifying the public spurred concern among antinuclear activists.

The Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear plant is the world's largest in terms of power output capacity. Fifty-five reactors supply about 30 percent of Japan's electricity.

"The damage is more than we had imagined," Kashiwazaki Mayor Hiroshi Aida said while inspecting damaged areas of his town. "We want to restore the water supply as soon as possible so more people can return home."

Nine people in their 70s or 80s—six women and three men—were killed in the quake, and 47 were seriously injured. *AP*

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Rock-solid Warriors in fiery start /A30

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Rising stars eye Landis, Armstrong status /A32

RP Open badminton championships fires off today /A32

FIESTA CUP FINALS

Phone Pals try to finish off Aces

AFTER PLAYING THE HERO WHO PUT TALK 'N Text on the verge of a first Philippine Basketball Association title in five years, Jay Washington made it clear that he doesn't want to wait a day longer for the Phone Pals to complete the job.

"I don't want to play a Game 7, that's for sure," Washington said. "No one wants to play a Game 7, that's why we have to get the job done and close this series out on Wednesday (today)."

But Washington knows that's easier said than done: "They (Alaska) are a tough team and it will definitely be a tough battle."

The Phone Pals get the first of two cracks—the only one they'd really love to use up—at 7 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum in Game 6 of the Fiesta Cup title series that has seen its share of twists and turns.

Talk 'N Text, whose last championship came in the 2002 All-Filipino, will be coming off a stirring 107-104 Game 5 triumph on Sunday night, when the Phone Pals turned a seemingly lost game around in the final four minutes.

The comeback has been a recurring theme in the series: One team gets ahead early, takes control of the match for most of the night and then ends up sore after falling victim to the opponent's scorching end-game rally.

"There's not a whole lot of adjustments that (both) teams can do," Washington, a 6-foot-7 sophomore, said. "I think it will all boil down on who will execute better."

Alaska, on the other hand, found its back against the wall for the first time in the tournament, and coach Tim Cone, a Grand Slam winner, is actually curious to find out how his Aces will respond to such a situation.

"We have never been in an elimination game before, when one loss could end our season," Cone said. "This will be the first test of our character in this tournament.

"I told the boys about that fact in the locker and they seem eager to get it on," he said. "This (Game 5) was by far the worst game we played in the series because we couldn't do the things we needed to do right."

Washington, together with JJ Sullinger, put Cone and the Aces in such a situation with a brilliant effort.

While Talk 'N Text had someone stepping up in the game on Sunday, Alaska had one in limbo.

Willie Miller, the season's Most Valuable Player, was good for six points on Sunday.

"He just didn't have it tonight," Cone said.

Musong R. Castillo

TALK 'N TEXT's JJ Sullinger stops on his track after getting tagged with a hard foul by Willie Miller (right) of Alaska. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAME TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
7 p.m.—Alaska vs Talk 'N.Text

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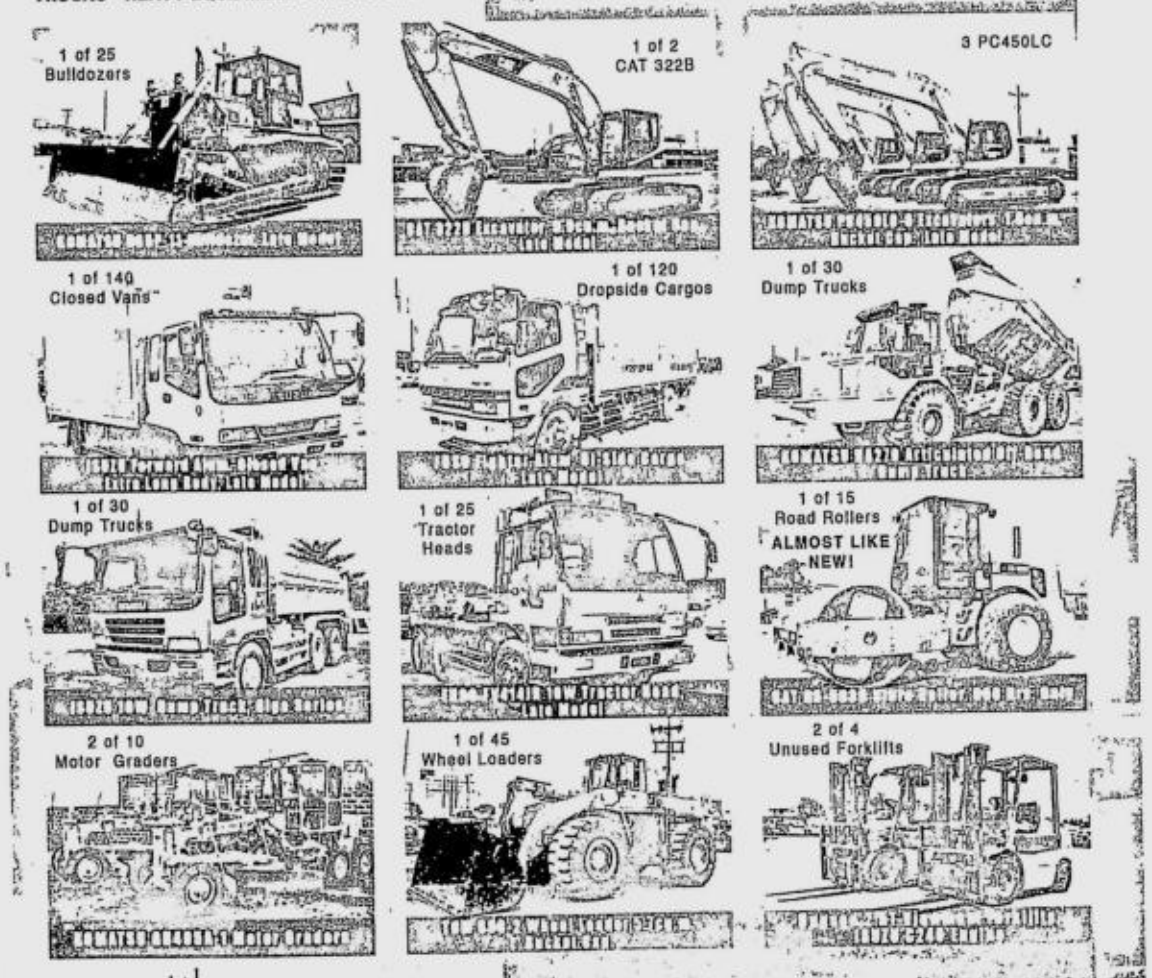

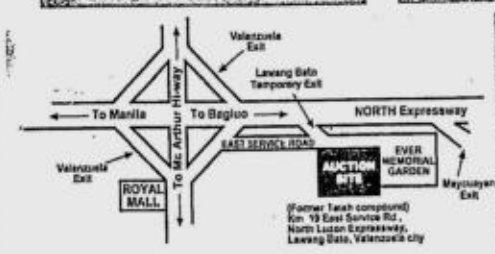

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RP five's final lineup known on eve of Fiba Asia caging

By Francis Ochoa

COACH CHOT REYES HASN'T SET FOR HIMself a deadline when he will name the 12 cagers who will take a shot at an Olympic slot in the Fiba Asia Championship that starts July 27 in Tokushima, Japan.

And neither is the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) pushing him to do so.

SBP executive director Patrick Gregorio told yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's-UN Avenue that the final lineup may be named the day before hostilities kick off in the tournament.

The event serves as the Asian qualifier for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Reyes said he plans to take the current 15-man team to Japan and make the cut there.

"There are too many things to consider before making the final cut," said Reyes yesterday at the Japan Embassy, where he and the other members of the team went to secure their visas.

The 15-man roster is made up of Asi Taulava, Danny Seigle, Mark Caguioa, Jimmy Alapag, Dondon Hontiveros, Kerby Raymundo, Jayjay Helterbrand, Mick Pennisi, Kelly Williams, Gabe Norwood, Erik Menk, Renren Ritualo, James Yap, Tony dela Cruz and KG Canaleta.

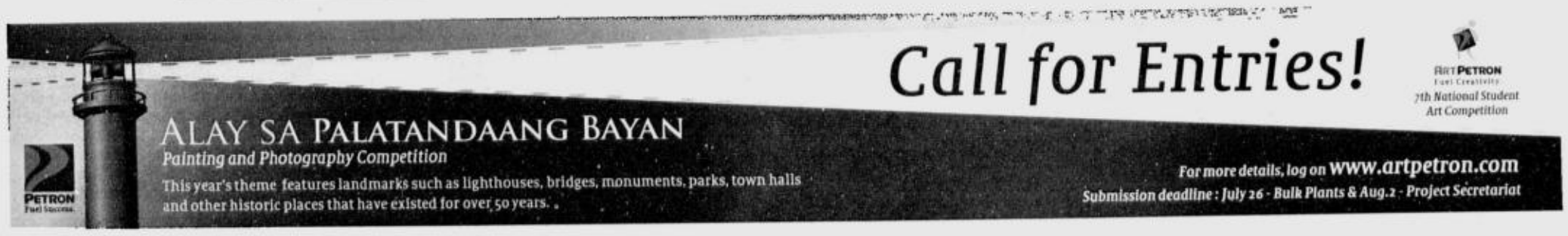
Reports have it that only the far end of the RP bench is left to be filled, but Reyes refused to name who among the players are shoo-ins. The team is set to play Qatar this weekend before flying to Japan on the 25th.

"We have until July 27 to name the final lineup," said Gregorio.

"We're still in the same situation as a couple of days ago," Reyes said. "It's hard to announce the lineup because of many variables."

Reyes said Williams and Norwood still have to get their Philippine passports. "We still have to see if [Kelly and Gabe] get their passports before making any decisions," said the national coach.

Gregorio and Norwood, who accompanied the team to the Japanese Embassy, left to proceed to the Department of Foreign Affairs building to work on the papers.



POC: Booters' SEAG stint a matter of national pride

By June Navarro

FIELDING THE NATIONAL FOOTball team in the Southeast Asian Games—despite its unsatisfactory record in the biennial meet—is "a matter of pride."

That's how the Philippine Olympic Committee feels over the possibility of easing out football and other team sports in the Games slated Dec. 6-16 in Thailand.

"It's the world's most popular sport," said POC secretary general Mark Joseph. "Why can't we send ours if countries like Laos and Cambodia never fail to send one in the SEA Games?

POC chair Robert Aventajado shares Joseph's sentiment, saying the resurgence of interest in football among Filipinos is slowly being felt.

"In the last two years, (RP) teams have been quite an attraction because of foreign players with Filipino roots," said Aventajado.

Stags battle Blazers today; Cards vs Altas

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	4	0
Letran	4	0
S. Sebastian	2	2
Perpetual	2	3
Jose Rizal	1	3
St. Benilde	1	3
Mapua	1	4

GAMES TODAY
(The Arena)
2 p.m.—SSC vs St. Benilde (Srs)
4 p.m.—Perpetual Help vs Mapua (Srs)

CATCHING UP WITH THE LEADERS and boosting their Final Four chances are the focus of four teams in the lower rungs when they clash today in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

San Sebastian, the team nearest to unbeaten pacesetters San Beda and Letran with an even 2-2 card, will try to stabilize its campaign when it goes up against faltering St. Benilde at 2 p.m.

Perpetual Help hopes to make it two in a row when it takes on Mapua in the second game at 4 p.m.

The Stags, excellently shuffled by interim coach Raymond Valenzona, seemed to have found the right combination against the Mapua Cardinals last Friday, banking on their towering frontline to score a 66-63 victory.

Jim Viray, Gilbert Bulawan and Jason Ballesteros—all standing at least 6-foot-4—took charge for San Sebastian, which wisely exploited its edge in height against Mapua.

But the formula may not work against the Blazers, who also boast tall players like 6-foot-5 veterans Christian Cabatu, Archie David and Martin Urra Jr.

The Blazers' fortunes also rest on main man Paolo Orbeta, who was held to four points by Red Lion Garvo Lanete in St. Benilde's 65-87 loss to San Beda last July 11. The Blazers are on a three-game tailspin and tote a 1-3 mark.

The Cardinals are still looking for a game that will turn things around. Last season, Mapua also had a rough ride in the elimination round but managed to nail a Final Four slot with a 7-7 record.

However, the Cardinals will be up against the Altas whose morale is boosted by a 79-72 double overtime victory over the Jose Rizal Heavy Bombers on Friday. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Rock-solid Warriors in fiery start

THEY GOT THE LEAST luck in the UAAP draw.

STANDINGS	W	L
UE	3	0
La Salle	2	0
Natioinal U	2	1
Ateneo	2	1
FEU	1	1
Adamson	0	2
UST	0	2
UP	0	2

GAMES TOMORROW
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
2 p.m.—Adamson vs UST (Srs)
4 p.m.—La Salle vs FEU (Srs)

Yet the University of the East Warriors, bolstered by another solid crew this season, managed to stay unbeaten early in the men's basketball competition.

"I was worried because our opening assignments were tough," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren.

"Any team wants to start the year right. The first few games are vital because it can give you the momentum for the rest of the season."

The Warriors got rolling by whipping defending champion Santo Tomas Tigers, 73-60, in the opening weekend.

Dark horse National U Bulldogs turned up as the next casualty last Thursday as the Warriors triumphed, 82-75. Four days later, the Recto-based squad dealt the Ateneo Blue Eagles their first loss, 76-73, to claim the solo lead at 3-0.

"I think the boys are showing maturity," said Pumaren. "They play with better composure during tight matches."

Pumaren cited veteran forward Kelvin Gregorio, who has set an example of consistency to the entire team.

"It's his toughness that I like most, and he's one of the reasons we're having a good start," he said.

The 6-foot-4 Gregorio averaged 15 points and six rebounds in his last two outings to bag the UAAP Press Corps' Anta Player of the Week plum.

"He may be shy, but once the game starts, he becomes very aggressive," Pumaren said of the 22-year-old from Teresa, Rizal.

Gregorio narrowly beat out for the citation teammate Elmer Espiritu, who knocked in back-to-back clutch baskets to lift the Warriors past the Eagles.

La Salle's Rico Maierhofer also earned a nomination for unloading 17 points and grabbing 15 rebounds in the Archers' 99-75 rout of Adamson.

Similarly unbeaten, La Salle thrashed the young University of the Philippines, 82-61, and Adamson, 99-75.

"I think we can put up a good fight," said Pumaren. "Our boys have been working very hard the past months."

Jasmine W. Payo

KELVIN Gregorio (center) of the UE Warriors drives off National U's Edwin Asoro and Cyrus Malagueño during the two teams' recent game. RYAN LIM

Victor meets vanquished for first time since 2003

By Roy Luarca

FILIPINO BOXING HERO MANNY PACQUIAO and Mexican icon Marco Antonio Barrera last met in the ring of the Alamodome on Nov. 15, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas. And that fight left vivid memories.

Mostly pleasant for Pacquiao and nightmarish for Barrera, who got stopped in the 11th round—the first time ever in his career.

They will meet again in Las Vegas on July 24, this time for a press conference formally announcing Pacquiao-Barrera II at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

The event will mark the start of a promotional blitz to be undertaken by Top Rank and Golden Boy Promotions which will jointly stage the rematch at the 12,000-seat Events Center inside the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

Pacquiao is slated to leave for the United States on July 19, presumably to start his training for the megabuck fight at the Wild Card Gym of renowned trainer Freddie Roach in Los Angeles.

The rematch between Pacquiao, 28, and the 33-year-old Barrera was given the green light by Top Rank big boss Bob Arum and Golden Boy Promotion CEO Richard Schaefer in Las Vegas yesterday.

Plans are afoot for a promotional tour in the West Coast or Mexico City, where Barrera is based.

Yet to be tackled are the ticket prices and other bouts in the undercard.

Pacquiao is batting for the appearance of countryman and newly crowned International Boxing Federation minimumweight champion Florante Condes, who dethroned Indonesian Muhammad Rachman on July 7 in Jakarta.

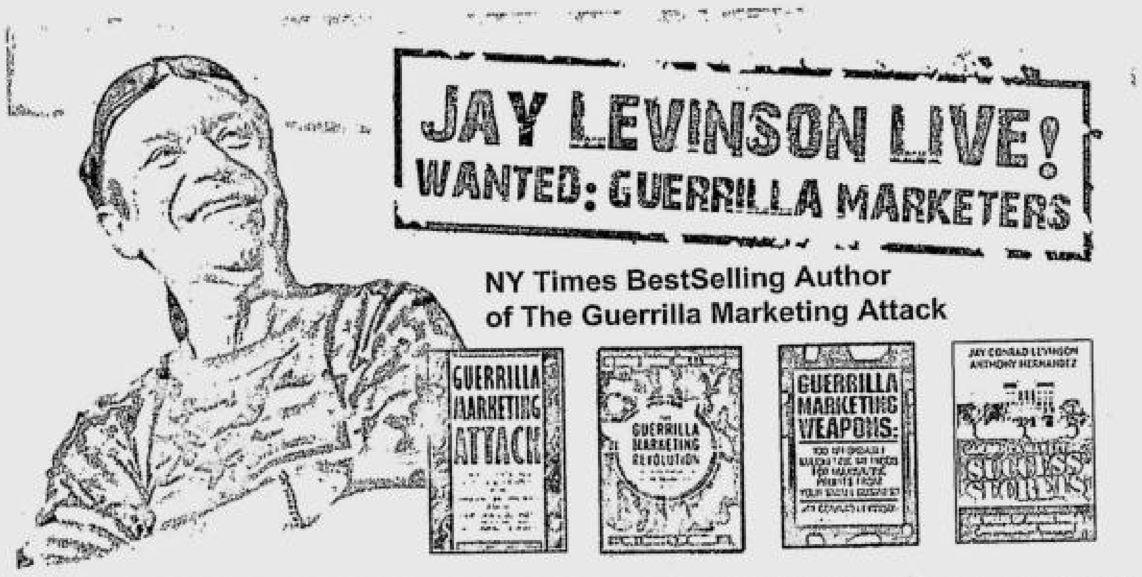
Donaire arriving Saturday

DOUBLE WORLD CHAMPION NONITO DONaire still considers the Philippines home.

The United States-based Donaire, fresh from wresting the IBF/IBO flyweight titles from the erstwhile unbeaten Vic Darchinyan, will be leaving for Manila on Thursday to share his new-found fame with his countrymen.

A huge underdog, Donaire stunned the boxing world when he knocked out the brash Darchinyan with a thunderous left hook in the fifth round on June 8, avenging his elder brother Glen's loss to Darchinyan late last year.

Donaire, who will be accompanied by his father Nonito Sr. and a cousin, has been invited by giant network ABS-CBN as a special guest during the airing of the "Coming to Fight" card headlined by Bernard Hopkins and Winky Wright on Sunday morning. *Roy Luarca*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* Traits of a Guerrilla Entrepreneur

MEGA LEARNING EVENT 2
JULY 27, 2007
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GUERRILLA MARKETING CONFERENCE
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Can they cure this RP five defect?

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

NOW THAT THEY HAVE SWEPT THE FLOOR of the victory debris, it's time to tell the truth about the triumphant Philippine national basketball team.

Yes, the team could indeed fulfill its mission in Japan later this month and qualify for the Beijing Olympics.

But the RP squad would need more than its share of luck to hit the jackpot.

It cannot afford to go for the Olympic slot as though it was betting in a horse race.

Coach Chot Reyes will have to use more high percentage five-man offensives if they are to succeed in their mission.

* * *

Sad to say, the RP team continues to grope for a solid, surefire weapon.

In the title match against Lebanon alone, it had to wait for a cold Mark Caguioa to catch fire in the second half and ignite a winning offensive.

The truth is that, on the whole, RP is a short team cramming and clamoring to play tall.

This was successfully typified by the fiery Jimmy Alapag who repeatedly stabbed his defenders with daring plays from both in and out.

Sorry again, but there's no vouch Caguioa, Alapag and even Renren Ritualo could always deliver when their points are badly needed.

* * *

Well, those are definitely no lucky punches Caguioa and Alapag are capable of throwing.

But, at the same time, there's always the danger of the RP team figuring out like Manny Pacquiao without the KO punch if the designated gunners fail to connect.

Caguioa could again suffer a cold spell, while Alapag had already demonstrated how to miserably miss crucial shots even if these are taken from the sanctity of the foul line.

* * *

There were just too many geniuses, coach Chot complained; altogether overlooking the fact that anybody hereabouts, from the poor baker to the *sorbetero* down the street, fashion themselves as basketball experts.

Of course, there's no reason to doubt coach Chot knows what he's doing—and what he needs.

It's just too bad that, try as he did, he could not come up with the tested materials to erect solid team offensives.

The sorry result was a dribble-happy national team often left to rely on individual plays.

Naturally, coach Chot often had no choice but resort to low-percentage offensives, as could be gleaned in the recent Jones Cup and the Manila Invitational which concluded on Sunday.

* * *

Yes, coach Chot knows this fault had to be instantly remedied.

In fact, he did not have to be told by Adiljan, mentor of the young Chinese squad which tripped the Philippines last week, that the Filipinos would need a solid system of play in order to succeed.

"The Philippines is a strong team, but you play individually, focusing on one-on-one plays, just like in the NBA. That is good for entertainment, but you can never win against China if you can't have teamwork," Adiljan told Manila Standard Today.

What Adiljan mentioned was the same affliction that had hobbled down past national teams.

A proper no-nonsense cure is imperative as the Olympic qualifying series draws near.

The solution? Last heard of, coach Reyes was pinning his hopes on the recovery and return to active duty of shooting star Danny Seigle, chief pointmaker of the RP shock troop.

* * *

(NO-NONSENSE: Lery Endaya, the underdog who surprised political experts in Batangas by winning the mayoral race in Cuenca, has vowed a no-nonsense solution to the various problems like drugs and disorder in his municipality. Endaya, formerly a security officer of Batangas Rep. Dodo Mandanas, says ordinances will be implemented to the fullest with no fear or favor. He made the vow recently at the Barangay Emmanuel residence of newly elected councilor Cornelio Mauleon, with Baltazar Atienza, Pepe Chavez, Berting Rosales, Mart and Cenon Mauleon in amused attendance.)

RP Junior World bets out to impress anew

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA—FOLowing last year's unprecedented triple victory, expectations are high that the Philippine delegation will continue its winning streak in the Callaway Junior World Golf Championships which starts Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila) in various venues here.

Dottie Ardina, Cyna Rodriguez and Mia Legaspi—authors of the 2007 championship treble, by far the country's best in its 30-year participation in the event—are at the forefront again of the Philippine campaign.

The Filipinos' cause is further boosted by the presence of two other former winners, Wolen Superal and JR Gonzales.

Ardina, winner of the WWGA national junior championship last week in Ohio, guns for her third Junior World crown, this time in the 13-14 years age-group which Rodriguez topped last year.

Rodriguez will now play in the the 15-17 category.

The bespectacled Legaspi guns for a repeat in the girls' 7-8 years division.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed," said Sam Pagdanganan, head of the 42-strong delegation from the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines which enjoys the support of Philippine Airlines, Electrobus/Callaway, Intel, Inquirer Golf and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

THE 40-member RP team during the Junior World parade. INQUIRER PHOTO/NICK SAGMIT-SAN FRANCISCO CORRESPONDENT

"We've got a number of potential winners and hopefully, they'll be able to deliver."

The RP players played their final practice rounds on Monday with six-year-old Ashia Mari Nocum scoring a hole-in-one on the third hole of Colina Park. A day earlier, Regina de Guzman also made an ace on the 100-yard third hole of the Torrey Pines north course with a 9-iron.

The RP entries:

Class A, 15-17: Girls (Torrey Pines North Course)—Cyna Marie Rodriguez, Regina De Guzman, Marie Dhel Dela Paz, Sunshine Baraquiel, Chihiro Ikeda; **Boys** (Torrey Pines South Course): John Kler Abdon, Jan Michael Karel Yee, Allan Guy

Class B, 13-14: Girls (Sycuan Resort Oak Glen)—Dottie Ardina, Angela De Villa, Marian Woo, Arleanne Joyce Salvador, Mara Monsalve; **Boys** 13-14 (Riverwalk Golf Club Mission/Presidio): Wolen Juan Superal, Carlos Marcel Puyat, Emmanuel Kishida, Jobim Carlos

Class C, 11-12: Girls (Lake San Marcos Country Club)—Irina Paulin Gabasa, Ma. Andrea Unson, Anne Sabater; **Boys** (Lake San Marcos Country Club)—Raymund Gonzales Jr., Miguel Luis Tabuena, Lorenzo "Bino" Dela Paz, Angelo Jose Gandionco

Class D, 9-10: Girls (Welk Golf Resort, Fountains)—Princess Superal, Lou Daniella Uy, Bianca Pagdanganan; **Boys** (Lomas Santa Fe Executive)—Juan Miguel Yee, Allenby Jiro Ramos, Mark Anthony Arevalo

Class E, 7-8: Girls (Sycuan Resort (Pine Glen)—Clare Amelia Legaspi, Lois Kaye Go, Abegail Arevalo; Boys (Sycuan Resort, Pine Glen)—Ryan Monsalve, Lanz William Uy, Ralf Michael Yap, Kristoffer Arevalo

Class F, 6-under: Girls (Colina Park Golf Course)—Francesca Bernice Ilas, Ashia Marie Nocum; **Boys** (Colina Park Golf Course)—David Llyod Bantug, Angelo Joseph Ballesteros, Carlos Philippe Winsett

Davadilla tops Criterium GP second leg

WARREN DAVADILLA BEAT FELLOW VETERans Victor Espiritu and Carlo Jasul in a mad scramble to the finish and copped the Elite Pro division of the Hitachi National Criterium Grand Prix second leg on Sunday.

The diminutive Davadilla, the 1998 and 2005 Tour champion, and Jasul wound up 1-2 at the finish line in the Parañaque City stretch of the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard after Espiritu decelerated in the last 50 meters.

Espiritu, the reigning Padyak Pinoy champion, won the first leg at Eastwood in Libis, Quezon City.

"*Nang bumagal si Victor, tinira ko na* (I attacked when Victor slowed down)," said the 30-year-old Airman second class of his triumph in the criterium races sponsored by Centrum complete multivitamin, the Philippine Estates Authority and Parañaque City government of Mayor Florencio Bernabe Jr.

Davadilla, who earned a slot in the National Criterium Grand Prix finals in November, pocketed P6,000, Jasul won P4,000 and Espiritu P2,000 in the one-day bikefest.

Evergreen Elpidio Untalan ruled the Elite Masters class, with Ramon Bereger and Danilo Abayon settling for second and third, respectively.

John Paul Morales topped the Elite Non-Pro division over Roby Urbano and Julius Calderon in the competitions sanctioned by the Philippine Cycling Federation.

The other winners:

FCAAF Beginner Road: 1. Kristian Juan, 2. William Ngo, 3. Roger Tan; **Beginner B:** 1. Eduardo Eyo, 2. Cesar Nimel, 3. Ali Lim; **Executive Open:** 1. Paul Maala, 2. Ernie Ortaleza, 3. Eduardo Lopez; **Executive PECA:** 1. Jimmy Cadena, 2. Noy Jopson, 3. Philip Angluaco

Training camp sharpens up young nat'l triathletes

A WEEK-LONG training camp conducted by a veteran Australian coach has boosted the Philippines' drive to be at par with the continent's finest in the junior category.

National team members Kim Mangrobang and Joash Serrano, Andrew and Ana Gatmaitan, Roel Odario and national duathlon junior champion Analiza Dysangco joined the camp held by Australian triathlon coach Jamie Turner, a veteran of more than 40 international training camps.

A separate four-day coaching course was conducted by ITU Sports Development official Alan Ley.

Triathletes from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Chinese-Taipei also joined the event held at the Subic Bay Freeport.

"We try to spread the global message on the latest developments in triathlon which the athletes and coaches should know," Turner said. "Asian triathletes are five to 10 years behind world standards, and this is part of ITU's move to upgrade them to world-class level."

Former national women's triathlon champion Ani de Leon, and duathlon coaches Mark Candelaria and Melvin Fausto attended the coaching accreditation course.

COACH Rick Reyes assists triathletes in stretching exercises.

TURNER

Four coaches each represented Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore, with Chinese-Taipei sending two and Thailand one.

Turner said the camp is part of ITU's worldwide program to develop triathlon in Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Americas.

He pointed out that development of top triathletes and coaches will always depend on the support they get from their national associations.

"The response from these young athletes was very positive and I see them racing in Cup races a few years from now," said Turner.

Ley suggested that Filipino coaches take a deeper look at what they want their athletes to achieve, and that specific norms was always be better than general objectives.

Local triathlon coach Rick Reyes, who supported the events together with other Trap national coaches, said Ley managed to push the athletes and coaches to learn more.

Mangrobang, who has attended a previous triathlon training camp abroad, said the Subic camp was better.

"Coach Turner is strict but we learned a lot from him," she said. *Romina S. Austria*

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Firehouse (4), St. Emilion (2), All Class (5)

Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Striking Cat/Crafty Treasure (7), Ocean Cockie (3), Take Ten (2), Interceptor (5), Dazzling Affair (8)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Common Goal (5), Princess Adarna (7), Isla Clipper (2), Beat D'Ace/Brown Carpet (4)

Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Amgonnatellmydad (6), Swiss Mood (1), Neenjitsu (3), Wind Shore Lady (7)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—King Aljhun (4), Graceful Conqueror (3), Road Runner (6), Mr. Lucas (5)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Manila Magic (2), Storm Hall (6), EJ Forever (5), Strong Boy (3)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)— God Is Good (6), Vhinggret (1), Queen Of Gala (3), Dulce My Love (4), Song Bird (8)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Euphoria (4), Makati Haven (6), Amazing Firenze (5), Znarf (11), Quick Play (2), Xtreme Heat (10)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

Section I. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply & Delivery of Various Construction/Hardware Materials, Electrical Items & Accessories, Telecommunication Tools, Parts & Accessories, and Electronic Tools/Equipment

Reference No.: PB070423-ES0062

1. The *National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO)* through the *CY 2007 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board*, intends to apply the sum of *Php 2,205,727.50* being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply & Delivery of Various Construction/Hardware Materials, Electrical Items & Accessories, Telecommunication Tools, Parts & Accessories, and Electronic Tools/Equipment.** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply & Delivery of Various Construction/Hardware Materials, Electrical Items & Accessories, Telecommunication Tools, Parts & Accessories, and Electronic Tools/Equipment. Delivery of GOODS is required *within seven (7) to thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of approved Purchase Order.* The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stocks belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders starting **July 16, 2007 to August 08, 2007 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).*** The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **July 24, 2007 at 2:00 P.M.** at same address below. Requests for clarifications on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-Bid Conference.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **2:00 P.M. of August 09, 2007.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form and amount:

Form of Security	Amount
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	1% of ABC
2. Bank guarantee	1.5% of ABC
3. Surety bond	2.5% of ABC
4. Foreign government guarantee	100% of ABC

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on **August 09, 2007 / 2:00 P.M.** at the *Admin Conference Rm. same address below.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Raul Joseph G. Seludo, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: (632) 981-2238, Fax No. (632) 9213479, 9216753
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) RAUL JOSEPH G. SELUDO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – July 18, 2007)

CONFERENCE KEY TOPICS

Building Brands That Last For Generations / Building Brands via TV Commercials / Building Brands Using Advertising Photography / Building Brands Through Musical Jingles / Building Brands with Printed Advertising Materials / Building Brands and Events Marketing

CONFERENCE RATES

	Members	Non-Members
Regular Rate	P5,500.00	P6,500.00
On-Site Rate	P6,500.00	P7,500.00
Academe	P3,000.00	

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SPORTS

RP Open badminton tilt kicks off

Top guns' withdrawal won't help Pinoy cause

By Romina S. Austria

BADMINTON'S best are all ready for action in yesterday's press conference. Among the stars are Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia (second from left), China's Chen Hong (third from left), American Tony Gunawan, Malaysian Lee Chong Wei, and Hafiz Hashim. With them during the tournament's official launch were Philippine Badminton Association (PBA) vice president Edgar Aglipay, PBA president and former First Lady Amelita Ramos and Albee Benitez of Bingo Bonanza. ROMY HOMILLADA

DESPITE THE WITHDRAWal of some participants, Filipino badminton players face a formidable task when they go up against some of the world's finest shuttlers in the $120,000-Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open which comes off the wraps today at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig City.

In fact, local top guns like Kennevic Asuncion, Lloyd Escoses, Karyn Velez and Irene Chiu had to go through the qualifying round, still playing as of press time, to make the main draw.

That is why Philippine Badminton Association president Amelita Ramos has called on badminton enthusiasts to rally behind the Philippine team.

"Of course we can be champions even if the world's best players are here," Ramos confidently declared during a media briefing yesterday at the Holiday Inn Galleria.

"But for them to do that, we have to support them. If they are inspired, may be they can pull it off," Ramos added.

Asuncion and sister Kennie were mixed doubles runners-up last year to Thailand's Sudket Prapakamol and Saralee Thoungthongkam and were awarded a main draw slot.

The Thai pair is not joining the event this year but fielded tougher replacements—top seeds Lilyana Natsir and Nova Widianto and the No. 2 tandem of Vita Marissa and Flandy Limpele.

Sisters Raquel and Rachel Guerrero have also gained a trip to the main draw and will meet Malaysia's Sook Chin Chong and Amelia Anselly in the first round.

But for the rest of the events—men's and women's singles and doubles—Filipinos have to earn their slots.

Xu Huaiwen of Germany, France's Pi Hongyan and Malaysian Mew Choo Wong, the top three seeds in the women's singles, have cited illness and injury for their withdrawal.

International badminton rules require them to submit a valid proof of their withdrawal or they will face sanctions and fines.

Eriko Hirose of Japan, Hong Kong's Pui Yin Yip and Dane Tine Rasmussen took over the top three seedings while three additional slots were disputed in the qualifier.

World No. 2 Chen Hong of China and reigning Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat are likely to meet in the quarterfinal round of the upper half of the 64-man main draw.

Tournament top seed Chen, a two-time All England and China Open winner, defeated Hidayat for the first time in the quarterfinal round of the 2006 World Championships.

Men's singles defending champion Mohd Hafiz Hashim of Malaysia admitted retaining the crown would be difficult.

"There are so many good players," Háshim, who may tangle with world No. 8 Kenneth Jonassen in the final 32, said through an interpreter.

Women's singles defending champion Saina Nehwal will face a qualifier in her opening match.

The singles winners will take home $9,600 each.

TOUR DE FRANCE

Rising stars eye Landis, Armstrong status

VAL D'ISERE, FRANCE—CALL IT A RACE for recognition.

After Monday's rest day, the Tour de France heads into its last ride through the Alps in the ninth stage Tuesday with the race finally starting to take shape—and a new crop of contenders emerging.

Michael Rasmussen of Denmark will wear the yellow jersey after winning Sunday's eighth stage, and he's entertaining notions of taking it home with him instead of the polka-dot jersey of the Tour's best climber that he won the last two years.

The void left by retirement and doping allegations clouding the sport have sidelined many cyclists who dominated the race for the past decade.

Seven-time champion Lance Armstrong retired, Floyd Landis is fighting doping allegations from last year's Tour, 1997 winner Jan Ullrich retired amid doping allegations, and 2005 runner-up Ivan Basso was suspended for two years after admitting to "attempted doping."

Their former lieutenants now want to make names for themselves.

Two of Ullrich's former support riders, Astana team members Alexandre Vinokourov and Andreas Kloeden, are seen as top contenders, but both are nursing injuries from crashes in the frenzied fifth stage. Carlos Sastre of Spain, once a workhorse for Basso, is Team CSC's leader.

RASMUSSEN: Greatness in sight. REUTERS

American Levi Leipheimer, a former teammate of Armstrong and current Discovery Channel leader, also is a threat. He has said his most prized victory so far was the Dauphine Libere in 2006—the year after Armstrong ended his career. Armstrong won the Dauphine twice.

"Maybe there'll be some young guys coming up like him, but it doesn't look like it," Leipheimer said at a news conference on the day off.

Armstrong, he said, was "a one-in-a-billion specimen."

Among the youngsters who could be the face of the future of cycling is 24-year-old Linus Gerdemann, a German who once idolized Ullrich. Gerdemann, a vocal proponent of clean cycling, won Saturday's stage and wore the prized yellow shirt until Rasmussen took it Sunday.

Nearing midpoint, the Tour is still anybody's race.

Vincent Lavenu, who manages the AG2R team, said 10-to-12 riders could be considered podium contenders, and "for the first, second, and third places, I don't know."

It's a sharp departure from the Armstrong era, when the American seemed to have the race well in hand early in his record run of Tour titles from 1999 to 2005.

Any feeling of recovery from Monday's day off is likely to vanish quickly: Riders scale the Iseran and Galibier passes—ascents that are among the hardest in the three-week race—in Tuesday's 159.5-kilometer (99.1-mile) stage from the Val d'Isere ski station to Briancon.

Rasmussen will be looking over his shoulder.

Among the likely contenders, Sastre is three minutes, 35 seconds back of Rasmussen, Kloeden is 3:46 behind, Leipheimer trails by 3:53, and Vinokourov is 5:23 off the pace. The Kazakh has been taking a mild analgesic to ease pain from stitches in both knees, Tour doctor Gerard Porte said.

Other hopefuls include Alejandro Valverde of Spain in fourth, 2:51 back. Cadel Evans of Australia trails by 2:53 behind and French veteran Christophe Moreau is 3:06 behind the Dane.

Many competitors expect the field to winnow in three tough stages in the Pyrenees starting Monday. *AP*

CKP168 rips Rusty Lopez as MBT starts

CKP168 STAMPED ITS CLASS ON RUSTY Lopez, 96-78, in the opening game of the 2007 MBT-Danny Espiritu Cup at the RTU gym in Mandaluyong Saturday.

Ex-pro Paeng Santos, Chito Jaime, Derick Hubalde and Christian Coronel each scored at least 12 points, leading CKP168 to an auspicious start in the tournament.

Bosyo Diaz fired 29 points with Ramon Retaga, Chico Manabat and Celso Pile each adding at least eight points for Rusty Lopez.

Wangs, De Ocampo Memorial College and Pacific Supertex also won their respective games on opening day, which was graced by sportsman Danny Espiritu, MBT commissioner Nilo Fernandez, RTU sports director Greg Coronel and Mark Chan of Athletes in Action.

Ramon Lintonjua erupted for 38 points as Wangs clobbered PNP, 93-79.

Weather may play crucial role in British Open

CARNOUSTIE, SCOTLAND—IT WAS wicked one minute, wonderful the next.

The rain and wind were so strong at Carnoustie on Monday morning that Tiger Woods and Rod Pampling didn't even bother with umbrellas, and Woods took off his glove when he lost feeling in his ring finger. By the afternoon, Henrik Stenson sat on the side of the practice range trying to decide which sunglasses to wear.

"It can turn in a hurry," Chad Campbell said. "We saw it today."

Sweaters gave way to short sleeves.

Coffee sales slowed as fans queued up at the ice cream stand.

The weather is often the best defense in links golf, and it's what makes the British Open so unique. Along with being brutal, it can change without notice, and sometimes having the good end of the draw can matter as much as raw talent.

But it has been on somewhat of a holiday since Woods' bid for the calendar Grand Slam in 2002 ended in a blast of arctic wind and stinging rain at Muirfield that sent him to an 81, still his highest score as a professional.

No telling how Mother Nature will behave when the British Open begins on Thursday, or for the rest of the week.

Woods, Pampling, Charles Howell III, Brett Quigley and Robert Karlsson were among those who left nothing to chance. Woods was on the first tee at 6 a.m., his typical starting time during practice rounds at the British Open.

Once he made the turn, he must have wondered why he bothered.

"One good thing about today is he's playing in a rain jacket," swing coach Hank Haney said. "He hasn't done that all year.

The round was quiet and quick. The harder the wind blew, the more the rain blew sideways, the more fun they seemed to have.

"Good thing we're playing today," caddie Steve Williams said. "It could be worse tomorrow."

No one bothered practicing putts or chips around the greens because the green was too soft. *AP*

Anniversary derby slated

THE ELIMINATION ROUND IN THE PCC 21ST Anniversary 6-cock derby continues today at Pasay City Cockpit, with more than 80 matches scheduled. A jampacked crowd of more than 5,000 spectators witnessed the opening round last Monday participated in by 90 entries. Twenty-three bets entered the finals after posting two wins each in the tournament presented by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. The guaranteed prize of P2 million will be given to the champions regardless of the actual number of entries. All qualifiers (at least one point) will face one another for the title on Friday, July 20. The champion handler and gaffer will get P100,000 and P50,000 respectively. For details, call 8166750, 8431890 and 8431746.

Crack Asian bikers here for Supercross

MOTOCROSS BIKES TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT this weekend when the 2007 FIM UAM Asia Pacific Supercross Championships kick off at the Fast Track Circuit in Taguig City this weekend when the Philippines hosts Round 2 of the 2007 FIM UAM Asia Pacific Supercross Championships.

The Asian series will coincide with a leg of the 2007 National Motocross Series.

The bulk of the delegation is expected to arrive today as the July 20 to 22 event, also known as the Mayor Tinga Cup Asian Supercross, draws near.

The participating foreign countries are Japan, New Zealand, Indonesia, Thailand, UAE, Guam, Mongolia and India. Race officials from USA, Indonesia and Australia are expected to arrive to officiate the event, approved by FIM Asian Supercross Commission president Macky Carapiet.

The new 65cc riders include Indonesians Anastasia Kirana, who is only 9 years old, and Michael Callaway, the current UAE National 65cc champion. The juniors 85cc category field will boast current Thai Champion Arunkrong and Indonesian entries Bobby Pamungkas and Farhan.

The Masters of Asian Supercross event is supported by the City of Taguig, Philippine Sports Commission, Pine Rental, Castrol, Bridgestone, JT Triumph, Honda, Pocari Sweat, OZ Racing, Wildman Sandals, Inside Racing, & Coca Cola.

The event will have official practice and registration this Friday.

Riders are advised to install their permanent NAMSSA Numbers on their machine's front and both sides. Other support races are the Honda XRM Mono Make and the San Mig Light Mountain Bike Challenge Rd. 2 to be held on Sunday at noon.

The Fast Track Circuit is located in Upper Bicutan, Taguig City in front of the Camp Bagong Diwa at the behind the Taguig Hall of Justice Compound.

For more details, call 0917-6221765 or log on to www.namssa.org

LEG WINNER: Rolly Gloda of Club Intramuros shows his trophy after topping Group I in the recent fourth leg of the 2007 San Mig Coffee Sugar Free golf series at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club. The Federation of Philippine Amateur Senior Golfers Inc. headed by its president Ducky Paredes is staging the event for the country's golfing elders.

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Peso hits 7-year high at 45.25 to $1

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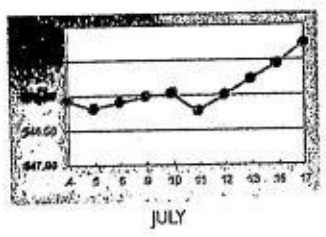

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 45.250 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., July 17, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares close lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.63-percent weaker yesterday as investors continued to grab profits from recent gains, dealers said.

The composite index was down 23.58 points to 3,729.68, off the day's low of 3,705.92. The all-share index fell 12.80 points or 0.53 percent to 2,407.48.

Losers outpaced gainers, 91 to 31, while 63 shares were unchanged.

A total of 4.3 billion shares worth P4.7 billion changed hands.

"Investors continued to cash in their gains in preparation for the next round of IPOs," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings Inc.

"Technically the market also needs to correct, after hitting a new record high last week," he said.

Aboitiz Power Corp., the most actively traded stock, fell 30 centavos to P5.50.

Analysts said Aboitiz Power's lackluster debut on Monday would make investors more circumspect about the valuations of other companies offering their shares to the public.

Among the upcoming offerings, GMA Television's IPO has attracted strong foreign investor interest, prompting the company to price its offering at P8.50 a share, the top end of its indicative price range.

Philippine National Bank also begins its international roadshow this week for a follow-on offering, while property developer Vista Land Lifescapes Inc. has also scheduled a stock offering before the end of this month. *AFP*

String of IPOs luring dollar inflows

THE PESO WAS DRIVEN TO A FRESH SEVEN-YEAR high against the dollar yesterday by foreign investment inflows into stock offerings and the view that the central bank would tolerate currency appreciation.

The peso rose to 45.25 a dollar, its strongest since September 2000 and a rise of 2.2 percent in five sessions.

"The market was looking for the 45.60 level to hold yesterday," said a currency trader. "But I think there are still inflows from various sources coming into the system. Several IPOs were slated for this month."

The biggest of those initial public offerings, Aboitiz Power Corp., listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange on Monday. It raised $221 million and the company had initially said 70 percent of the IPO would be sold to international investors.

Broadcaster GMA Network Inc. is set to raise $170 million through its IPO and property developer Vista Land and Lifescapes will soon be making the country's biggest secondary share issue of roughly $459 million.

Last week, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas cut its main borrowing and lending rates by 150 to 175 basis points and removed a tiering scheme for overnight deposits left with it.

While analysts differ on the overall monetary impact of these measures, they expect an improving fiscal and economic scenario to underpin the peso this year.

However, traders expect some intervention from the Bangko Sentral to temper the adverse effects of a strong peso on exporters. *Reuters*

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET EYED

No funds for Customs rewards

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS SAID there was no need to undergo the tedious process of requesting a budget from Congress for the granting of incentives to overperforming collectors.

Customs Deputy Commissioner Rey Umali said the Lateral Attrition Law requires automatic appropriation in the national budget to cover the rewards of overperforming collectors from the bureaus of Internal Revenue and of Customs.

Given the provision requiring an automatic budget appropriation, Umali said there should be no delays in the disbursement of incentives to deserving collectors.

The clarification was made following delays in the distribution of the monetary rewards that should have been given to deserving employees of Customs as the agency surpassed its revenue collection target last year of P196 billion by more than P2 billion.

Under the Lateral Attrition Law, revenue collectors of the BIR and the BOC are entitled to monetary incentives if the agencies meet their full-year targets. The law likewise requires the imposition of penalties on under-performers, either by demotion, reassignment or dismissal.

The law says that the minimum incentives to be granted should be equivalent to 15 percent of the collection in excess of the target. If the excess collection is more than 30 percent of the goal, then the reward should be equivalent to 20 percent of the excess collection.

Only BOC employees were entitled to rewards because the BIR fell short of its P675.4-billion target for 2006.

Until now, Customs employees

NO FUNDS/ B7

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Avida to invest P7B in 16 condo projects /B3

Meralco urged to raise supply deal with Napocor /B7

IMF to assess dev'ts on RP's fiscal front /B8

Port operator buys into Pacifica

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FIRM Strategic Alliance Development Corp. (Stradec) has sold 33.6 percent of its stake in in listed holding firm Pacifica Inc. to Mikro-Tech Capital Inc., a corporation headed by Manila port operator Michael Romero.

Romero is the president of Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc., the operator of a non-containerized international port terminal in the Port of Manila, Pacifica said in a recent disclosure.

Stradec sold 13.44 billion "A" shares in Pacifica. As of Dec. 31, 2006, Pacifica's financial statements filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange showed that Stradec owns 66.94 percent of Pacifica.

Stradec, the controlling majority shareholder Pacifica is a project development organization that has conceptualized, operated and financed construction and information technology projects.

The 35-kilometer Metro Manila Skyway project, with a cost of $2.3 billion, was its pioneering infrastructure project.

Its other projects include the 58-km Metro Manila Tollway, a component of Metro Manila's Circumferential Road-6 with a project cost of $624 million; the 22-km Stage 1 of the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road which extends from Sto. Tomas to Lipa City in Batangas, and the 20-km stretch to Batangas City.

Stradec is also involved in the $80-million computerization and modernization project for the Land Transportation Office (LTO).

kotra Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

TRADE MISSION
JEONNAM - JEONBUK
HOTEL INTERCON MAKATI CITY
TUESDAY, 24 JULY 2007 • 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

TEA AND BEVERAGES
Boseong Sambekcho Farm — Korean Health Green Tea, Health Snacks
Shalom Industries Co. — Food Supplement, Tea w/Ashitaba
Daedero Farm Association — Traditional Korean Health Liquor
Sung Hwan F&B Co. Ltd. — Tea: Honey Citron, Aloe, Raspberry

CONDIMENTS, FOOD, EXTRACTS
Fromwell — Fermented / Spicy Soybeans, Paste
Health Gene Food — Black Raspberry Sauce, Jam, Extract
Hanboul Foodcheepia — Ginseng, Venison w/ Medicinal Herbs, Garlic
Maeil Foods Co. Ltd. — Hot Pepper Paste and Food Sauce
Hankuk Foods Co. Ltd. — Pickled & Seasonig Radish, Cucumber
Yoo Myung Seafood Inc. — Hot Peppered Fish Paste

ORGANIC / CHEMICAL TREATMENT
Dongsung NCT — Agri/Compound Mineral Fertilizer
GoKorea Co. Ltd. — Food Waste Treatment Sink System
Koreastevia Co. Ltd. — Herbal/liquid additive for agriculture/food
Sang Myeong Entech — Gas, Boiler Pipe Cleaning Chemical

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS / MEDICAL
Clifer Co., Ltd. / LNTek — Sunscreen Tint Film: Buildings, Windows
Hyundai En Tech Inc. — Marine Disel Engine & Parts: Propulsion, Gensets, Etc.
Han Seong Steel Ind. Co. Ltd. — Steel Frame, Pipe, H Beam, C-Channel
Sun Meditech Co. Ltd. — Wireless Digital Stethoscope w/ Data interface

THE KOREA TRADE CENTER (KOTRA MANILA) INVITES YOU TO A ONE-ON-ONE BUSINESS MEETING WITH THE KOREAN TRADE MISSION FROM JEONNAM-JEONBUK ON TUESDAY - 24 JULY 2007. VENUE WILL BE AT THE MANDARIN HOTEL IN MAKATI CITY.

Individual meetings will be arranged between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM

For appointment confirmation, you may contact us at Tel. nos.:

893-1183, 893-3244 or via fax 817-3369 and 751-4358 or via E-mail : charlie.kotramanila@yahoo.com.ph and charlie.ktcmanila@gmail.com

Look for Mr. Charlie Alveyra, Ms. Hazel Guemo, or Ms. Izza Ortega.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 17, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.2	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.5	10,000
73	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	70.5	70.5	69.5	70	557,000
73.5	47.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	71	71	69.5	69.5	793,400
935	630	China Banking Corp.	895	895	890	890	4,820
40	19	Chinatrust Comm'l Banking Corp.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	1,100
20.25	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
0.63	0.37	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.54	0.55	0.54	0.54	1,110,000
75.5	34	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	72	72	70.5	70.5	1,065,400
68	35.5	Philippine Savings Bank	64	64	64	64	2,000
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	52	52	52	52	1,000
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	36	36	35	36	1,597,100
90	45	Security Bank Corp.	86.5	86.5	86	86	7,200
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	62.5	62.5	62	62	220,500
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	5	5	4.95	4.95	8,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.2	1.2	163,000
16.25	1.64	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	15.5	15.5	14.5	14.75	1,121,200
8.8	3.5	Filipino Fund Inc.	8	8.3	8	8.3	62,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	135,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	41.5	42	41.5	42	10,400
1,710.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,705.00	1,705.00	1,705.00	1,705.00	800
5	4.05	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	6,966,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.55	2.55	100,000
1,005.00	211	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	810	840	810	840	7,550
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,170.00	2,180.00	2,170.00	2,180.00	560
1.94	1.22	Vantage Corp.	1.82	1.86	1.82	1.82	611,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	5.5	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.5	116,151,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	2,930,000
69.5	41.5	First Gen Corp.	69.5	69.5	69	69	87,600
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	89	89.5	88.5	88.5	330,000
14.75	7.5	Manila Water Company Inc.	14.25	14.75	14.25	14.75	8,184,400
116	14.5	Manila Electric Company A	106	106	103	103	198,620
118	23.25	Manila Electric Company B	107	107	103	104	1,478,020
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.5	53,726,000
6.5	3.7	Petron Corp.	6.2	6.2	6	6.2	4,342,000
14.75	12	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	13	13	12	12.25	4,391,200
2.5	1.6	Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	35,000
1.9	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.48	611,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.2	2.22	2.2	2.2	559,000
2.75	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	39,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26	26	13,200
61	30.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	54	54	53.5	53.5	382,500
1.9	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.74	1.76	1.7	1.76	791,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	1,406,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. A	76	76	74	75	121,400
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. B	82	82.5	82	82.5	208,400
0.61	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.52	680,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	47,300
0.55	0.19	Vitarich Corp.	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.41	1,310,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.43	EEI Corp.	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.7	1,082,000
12.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	11	12.5	11	12.5	16,000
9.2	4.3	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	8	103,000
2	0.25	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.68	1.64	1.66	1,008,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	1,946,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	6,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.64	0.045	Picop Resources Inc.	0.52	0.64	0.52	0.63	568,770,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.78	A. Soriano Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.65	1,385,000
0.17	0.023	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.135	201,180,000
1.28	0.195	APC Group Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.06	1.06	9,394,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.55	2.7	2.55	2.7	453,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	2.75	2.8	2.7	2.75	291,000
0.018	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	371,600,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	15,600,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.2	8.2	9,600,000
0.021	0.007	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.017	196,500,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	18,784,000
1.38	0.48	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.98	1.04	0.98	1.04	210,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.48	2.48	2.44	2.46	2,521,000
590	308.33	Ayala Corp.	570	570	555	560	128,030
14.5	6.96	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	100
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.8	4.9	4.5	4.5	668,000
5.8	1.04	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.5	4,062,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.6	503,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.4	75,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	38,300
3.95	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	2.12	3.95	2.1	3.95	11,426,000
0.8	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	130,000
0.95	0.13	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	200,000
11.5	0.26	Multitech Investments Corp.	8.6	8.8	8.2	8.3	5,774,000
30	0.88	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	25.5	26.5	24.75	24.75	439,000
5.4	1.3	PAL Holdings Inc.	4.65	5	4.65	5	1,706,000
0.75	0.16	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.56	5,710,000
452.5	200.44	SM Investments Corp.	432.5	432.5	422.5	430	141,110
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.53	0.54	0.52	0.52	16,990,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	100,000
1.6	0.78	South China Resources Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	291,000
0.75	0.085	Wellex Industries Inc	0.5	0.53	0.49	0.5	8,050,000
1.1	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	570,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.74	1.76	2,282,000
1.06	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.8	0.8	640,000
19.25	10	Ayala Land Inc.	17.75	18	17.5	18	20,043,000
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.58	1.6	4,703,000
4.7	2.1	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.35	255,000
0.86	0.26	Crown Equities Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	1,030,000
0.83	0.18	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.55	3,660,000
3.25	0.75	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	50,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.86	0.84	0.84	17,290,000
0.32	0.038	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.28	17,690,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	3,173,000
2.44	0.59	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.12	2.14	41,025,000
0.41	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.3	0.35	0.3	0.33	3,280,000
0.42	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.34	5,720,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	550,000
1.12	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.9	0.91	0.89	0.91	640,000
4.4	1.28	Megaworld Corp.	3.85	4	3.9	3.95	24,696,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.25	75,000
0.7	0.11	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.46	0.46	970,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.66	0.66	3,340,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	115,000
23	10.5	Robinson Land Corp.	20	20	19.75	19.75	987,700
5.8	1.25	SM Development Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	1,465,000
13.5	5.92	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	13	13.5	12.75	13.5	11,552,500
1.34	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	1.04	1.06	0.99	1	590,000
0.36	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.27	0.28	6,770,000
		MEDIA					
37.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	37	37.5	36	37	445,400
1.14	0.98	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	121,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	5,229,000
1,445.00	900	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,370.00	1,370.00	1,345.00	1,345.00	54,850
2,820.00	1,790.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,700.00	2,705.00	2,690.00	2,700.00	198,050
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.1	7.2	7	7.2	3,741,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	5,000,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10.5	10.5	10	10	29,000
10.5	2	IPVG Corp.	9.4	9.6	9.3	9.5	2,648,000
0.065	0.0274	ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.048	0.049	72,200,000
29.5	5.5	Imperial Resources Inc. A	21	26.5	21	26	3,400
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	170,000
0.32	0.04	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.26	0.27	532,730,000
2.08	1.12	Music-Semiconductors Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	110,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb Com Inc	0.06	0.06	0.0575	0.06	9,200,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.75	1,298,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	171,000
34.6	14	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	34	34.5	33.5	34	1,258,400
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	2.06	2.08	2.04	2.06	347,000
2.04	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.52	1.52	58,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	133,000
0.98	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc	0.76	0.76	0.72	0.76	1,930,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.93	0.95	0.91	0.95	430,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	16,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	25	25	25	25	2,400
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.3	674,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	236,500
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	23.5	23.5	23	23.25	343,800
		MINING					
0.016	0.0075	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	24,500,000
7.6	3.3	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	308,000
7.7	3.35	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.6	47,000
21.25	7.4	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15.25	15.25	15	15	3,291,300
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	29,000
5	1.76	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	70,000
3.1	0.0713	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.8	2.9	33,966,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	9,460,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	16,010,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.031	212,700,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.033	0.033	0.032	0.032	102,600,000
0.024	0.008	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.02	460,200,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.6	5.6	15,891,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	39	39	39	39	340,700
1.36	0.35	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.08	3,629,000
1.8	0.52	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.38	5,100,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	6,610,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.022	405,300,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	31,200,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	150,000
0.028	0.0069	The Philodrill Corp.	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	451,900,000

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CURRENCIES

July 17, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.726058	1.000000	45.6110
Japan	Yen	0.005959	0.008207	0.3743
United Kingdom	Pound	1.478981	2.037000	92.9096
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.092849	0.127881	5.8328
Switzerland	Franc	0.603439	0.831117	37.9081
Canada	Dollar	0.696125	0.958773	43.7306
Singapore	Dollar	0.478615	0.659196	30.0666
Australia	Dollar	0.632896	0.871688	39.7586
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.926088	2.652801	120.9969
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.193600	0.266645	12.1619
Brunei	Dollar	0.477042	0.657030	29.9678
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000081	0.000111	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.024275	0.033434	1.5250
UAE	Dirham	0.197696	0.272287	12.4193
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.377300	62.8200
Korea	Won	0.000791	0.001089	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.095941	0.132139	6.0270
Argentina	Peso	0.234213	0.322581	14.7132
Brazil	Real	0.389266	0.536136	24.4537
Denmark	Kroner	0.134418	0.185134	8.4441
India	Rupee	0.018052	0.024863	1.1340
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.211094	0.290740	13.2609
Mexico	New Peso	0.067367	0.092785	4.2320
New Zealand	Dollar	0.574913	0.791828	36.1161
South Africa	Rand	0.104320	0.143680	6.5534
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022122	0.030469	1.3897

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—July 16, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of July 16, 2007

Avida to invest P7B in 16 condo projects

Ayala affordable housing unit bullish

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

AVIDA LAND CORP., AYALA'S AFFORDABLE housing unit, is spending P7 billion on the construction of new condominiums as it remains upbeat on the prospects of the property sector.

Avida Land president Leo Montenegro said in a briefing yesterday that the company is expanding its existing residential condominium projects.

As many as 16 towers will be put up over the next four years in San Lazaro, Manila; New Manila in Quezon City; Sucat in Paranaque and in Makati City.

The newest addition in Makati called Avida Towers Makati West at the corner of Malugay and Yakal Sreets will cost roughly P1 billion.

Avida Towers Makati West will consist of two towers or a total of 861 units.

The first tower will have 462 units.

At the soft launch of Avida Towers Makati West yesterday, Avida Land said its latest Makati project will offer studio (21 square meters), one-bedroom (approximately 33 sq. m.) and two-bedroom (50 sq. m.), garden and penthouse units costing from P1.5 to P3 million.

Each of the units offers high ceilings and large windows to allow for good natural lighting and ventilation.

Avida Land will offer Avida Towers Makati West to junior executives, professionals and young families.

Avida Land's projects address the needs of the affordable housing segment and includes overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who in 2006 made up 26 percent of Avida sales across all residential product lines.

These include house-and-lots in 13 locations in Luzon.

As of the first half of the year, OFWs accounted for 40 percent of Avida's sales.

Nontraditional coco product exports up

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORT EARNINGS FROM nontraditional coconut products are on the rise as demand for products made from natural ingredients drove volumes, according to an industry report.

Data from the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines showed that eight coconut-based products—other than major exports like coconut oil, copra meal, desiccated coconut and oleochemicals—made it to the list of those with earnings above $100,000 for the month.

Topping the list was shampoo, cashing in $719,933 from shipments reaching 229 MT.

Major buyers of coconut shampoo were Pakistan, which took more than a third of total volume.

Glycerin, an ingredient in home-made and commercial beauty products, earned $584,945 from 973 MT, which was, however, an 8.3-percent slide from the volume sent out in March 2006.

Virgin coconut oil earned $357,001 with 131 MT, which was 30 times the volume sent in March last year.

Health-conscious Americans and Canadians gobbled up some 99 percent of the cargo.

Liquid coconut milk earned $173,775 from 131 MT sent out to the US, the Netherlands, Belgium, Japan and a dozen other countries.

Macapuno or coconut sport posted $154,437 from a shipment of 77 MT, which was 40.6 percent more than the year-ago volume.

The Japanese remained the top buyer of nata de coco, ordering 80 percent of the total 480 MT, which was unfortunately 27 percent short of last year's March volume.

Chemrez posts ₱195-M profit

By Abigail L. Ho

BIODIESEL PRODUCER CHEMREZ TECHnologies Inc. posted a net income of P195.2 million in the first half, soaring 292.6 percent from the same period last year.

In a disclosure yesterday to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the company said its consolidated gross revenues—which included sales of coco-biodiesel, resins, powder coatings and oleochemicals—surged 47.5 percent to P1.62 billion.

The company's net income already surpassed recurring earnings for the entire 2006, Chemrez said.

Although anticipated to account for bulk of the company's revenues for the year, biodiesel sales only contributed 25 percent to consolidated revenues in the first half, mainly because bulk deliveries to oil firms only started in late April.

The one-percent mandated biodiesel blend was only implemented on May 6.

Chemrez has secured contracts to supply 4.5 million liters of coco-biodiesel to various local oil firms, including refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., this month alone.

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2007 Isuzu D-MAX to c

ONE of the most successful models in the history of Isuzu has just gotten even better. Isuzu Philippines Corporation has introduced the 2007 D-MAX that has captured the fancy of pickup lovers around the world ever since its launch five years ago. It has not only won numerous awards but also made impressive sales in virtually all the markets it is sold in.

Perhaps none of these distinctions can be greater than the fact that the D-MAX is a runaway success in Thailand, the pickup market of the world. Tri Petch Isuzu Sales (Thailand) director Panatda Chennavasin attended the Manila launch of the 2007 D-MAX and talked about the incredible global success of the do-it-all pickup by Isuzu.

From the very beginning, the D-MAX has been consistent in making impressive sales globally since its launch in Thailand in 2002. It sold over 10,000 units within the first 10 days after its launch, and more than 100,000 units in its first year, igniting the Isuzu D-MAX phenomenon. It has become Thailand's best-selling vehicle ever, reaching the 100,000-unit mark in no time at all. In 2003, the D-MAX set a sales record of 120,000 units and continued to be unbeatable due to its world-class performance and design that have completely won the hearts and minds of Thai motorists.

Chennavasin further declared the D-MAX as "the best-selling vehicle in the history of Thailand" with a historic sales record of more than 500,000 units in just a little over three years since its introduction. In October 2006 and May 2007, the D-MAX sold more than 600,000 and 700,000 units, respectively.

The clamor for the D-MAX has expanded overseas and when Isuzu Philippines Corporation (IPC) introduced it to our market in 2003, Isuzu dominated the pickup category in the same year.

The Isuzu D-MAX has been the favorite pickup among Filipinos. For three consecutive years beginning in 2005, the D-MAX was voted by the public "Pickup of the Year" in the People's Choice Awards organized by the Auto Focus motoring TV program.

So how do you improve upon a smash hit and award-winner? Not wishing to mess with a proven formula, Isuzu came up with only the most significant changes for the 2007 D-MAX-changes that will only further cement the D-MAX's status as the ideal pickup in its class.

Heading the changes and new features in the 2007 D-MAX is a new diesel engine under the hood. Finally, the D-MAX is now powered by a 3.0-liter 4JJ1 I-TEQ common-rail direct-injection diesel engine with turbo intercooler that produces a maximum output of 146ps at 3,800rpm and a maximum torque of 294 Newton-meters at 1,400rpm to 3,400rpm. This means more muscle but also better fuel-efficiency for the hardest-working pickup in the market.

At launch, the new Isuzu D-MAX is available only in 4x2 version, but with three variants: the LT base model, the LX midrange model and the LS high-end model. The LX and the LS both get the above-mentioned CRDi diesel engine, while the LT has the rect-injection diesel duces a maximum 3,900rpm. Both the L manual transmissior the option of an autor

The other signific 2007 D-MAX are the of the grille up fron height increase of 25 the LX, lending the look and making it th class.

The LS and the LX lowing in common: and stabilizer bar fo (coil springs for the L elliptical leaf springs tical leaf springs for t minum wheels (15-in

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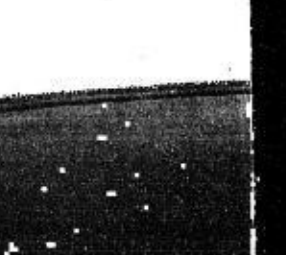
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ontinue global success

2.5-liter 4JA1-L di- engine that pro- output of 81ps at T and the LX have a , while the LS has natic gearbox.

nt changes in the new six-hole design and an additional mm for the LS and pickup a stronger e tallest in the 4x2

also share the fol- torsion bar springs r front suspension T); Flex Ride semi- (regular semi-ellip- he LT); 16-inch alu- ch steel for the LT); black leather steering wheel (urethane for the LT); new chrome rear bumper and side stepboard design; new crystal lens rear combination lamp; projector-type headlamps (halogen multi-reflector type for the LT); Optitron-type instrument panel (analog type for the LT); six audio speakers (two speakers for the LT); sports jersey/fabric combination for the seats (vinyl seats for the LT); keyless entry; power and central door locks; power windows; and power side mirrors.

The LS, being the high-end variant, additionally gets a Pioneer in-dash CD/MP3 player with USB and iPod connectivity, dual airbags and antilock brakes.

The LT is available in Glacial White and Sterling Silver. The LX, meanwhile, is available in Glacial White and Touchstone Gray. The LS is painted in Glacial White, Tornade Red, Ebony Black, Impulse Blue, Phoenix Gold and Touchstone Gray.

The LT manual is priced at P805,000, while the LX manual sells for P925,000. The LS manual and automatic have introductory prices of P1,015,000 and P1,075,000, respectively.

"While the D-MAX has consistently sold well in the Philippines, we at Isuzu are constantly finding ways to innovate and improve this global product," said IPC president Keiji Takeda. "Not only is the 2007 D-MAX as reliable and durable as it has always been, I am proud to say it is now even more powerful and definitely better-looking. No wonder it continues to be successful around the world and-more importantly for us-in the Philippines as well."

'D-MAX has been consistent in making impressive sales globally since its launch in Thailand in 2002. It sold over 10,000 units within the first 10 days after its launch, and more than 100,000 units in its first year . . .'

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NOTICE OF SEARCH & CALL FOR APPLICATION

The Board of Regents formally and publicly announces that the **Search for the Presidency** of Partido State University is **RE-OPENED.**

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Filipino citizen;
- Holder of an EARNED doctorate degree in any academic field relevant to the mission and mandate of the University;
- Must have five (5) years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
- Recognized leadership in his/her profession;
- Morally upright and never been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude; and
- Shall not be 61 years old at the time of the deadline of submission set for application

VALID DOCUMENTS REQUIRED (Six (6) Copies)

- Letter of intention/application
- Detailed Curriculum Vitae and all supporting documents
- Proposed vision, mission and thrust for the University
- Clearance from Police, NBI, Ombudsman, Sandiganbayan and Civil Service Commission
- Full disclosure of all administrative, criminal and/or civil cases filed

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FINAL CANDIDATES

Medical certificate and result of neuro-psychiatric examination shall be asked from the final candidates who shall be recommended to the PSU Board of Regents.

Applications are requested to be submitted on or before August 22, 2007.

Ms. Leih Anne R. Odoño
Board Secretary V
Partido State University
San Juan Bautista St., Goa, Camarines Sur

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: itombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines

SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION SYSTEM FOR LTO-NCR (North and South MVIS), REGIONS III (San Fernando, Pampanga), IV-A (Lipa City), VII (Cebu City) and XI (Davao City)

The Land Transportation Office, through the MVUC Funds (Fund 151) intends to apply the sum of One Hundred Fourteen Million Pesos (P114,000,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the Supply and Installation of Motor Vehicle Inspection for LTO-NCR (North and South MVIS), Regions III , IV-A, VII and XI. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved Contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the LTO Special BAC-Chairman and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php25,000.00, in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on July 27, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at the LTO-Bulwagang Edu, East Avenue, Quezon City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered August 9, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., at the LTO-Bulwagang Edu, East Avenue, Quezon City. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on August 9, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at LTO-Bulwagang Edu, East Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the LTO-Bulwagang Edu.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Camilo T. Guarin - Chairman, LTO Special BAC (MVIS Project)
National Capital Region, Pasig City
(02) 6350153 - Telefax
(02) 6342941

(Sgd.) **CAMILO T. GUARIN**
LTO Special BAC - Chairman

(PDI – July 18, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
LA CARLOTA CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT CORP. Unit 302 Wholesalers Bldg. 3, Celery Rd., FTI Complex, Taguig City	Ki Bum Park	Executive Vice President on Administration
MAERSK GLOBAL SERVICE CENTRES (PHILIPPINES) LTD. 21/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Emerald Ave.,Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Kee Joon Thong	Head, Finance and Accounting (F&A)
TSM SHIPPING (PHILS.), INC. 1751 Dian St., Palanan, Makati City	Arnt Olav Valnedalen	Overseas Technical Consultant and Foreign Principal' s Representative
CEFN AUSTRALIA CORPORATION Suite 310, Reliance House, 205 EDSA cor. Rochester St., Mandaluyong City	Walter Joseph Osborne	Technical Services Consultant
CEFN AUSTRALIA CORPORATION Suite 310, Reliance Housè, 205 EDSA cor. Rochester St., Mandaluyong City	Sara Leigh Kingsman Osborne	Office Administrative Consultant
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Kuo-Ming Wu	Personnel Director
UPC ASIA WIND MANAGEMENT LLC 16/F Robinson's Summit, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Karthikeyan Radhakrishnan	Wind Resource Manager - Asia
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinson's Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Thien Chi Nguyen	Vietnamese Client Support
SYKES ASIA INC. 26/F Robinson's Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Felix Samuel Simatupang	Indonesian Client Support
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES INC. 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Makati City	Guodong Wang	TSD Engineer

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

for ISABEL G. PANGANIBAN-ORTIGUERRA
Acting Regional Director

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

(PDI–July 18, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
DepED

Office of the Undersecretary

July 9, 2007

Notice to All Concerned

1. In connection with the 2007 Textbook Call for elementary Mathematics Grades 1 to 6 and Science and Health Grades 3 to 6 textbooks and teacher's manuals (TXs / TMs), please be informed that the deadline for submission of evaluation copies for the above-mentioned subject areas is postponed to **September 24, 2007.** This will allow interested publishers more time to review and finalize their books prior to submission to DepEd.
2. The deadline for submission of the evaluation copies for English Grade 5 TXs / TMs is still on **July 31, 2007.**
3. Please be advised that the paper size of evaluation copies for the English, Math, and Science and Health TXs / TMs to be submitted to DepEd for this TX Call is **8-1/2 inches by 11 inches.** This will allow bigger margins for the evaluators to write their comments and feedback on the books. The technical specification for the trim size of printed TXs / TMs is still 6-1/2 inches by 10 inches.
4. For the information and guidance of all concerned.

(Sgd.) **TEODOSIO C. SANGIL Jr.**
Undersecretary and BAC Chair

(PDI–July 18, 2007)

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Republic of the Philippines
Mindanao Rural Development Project II
Rehabilitation of Udtong-Madanding-Kabulacan FMR
01-LAM-SKP-07

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) *has received* a loan from the World Bank toward the cost of Mindanao Rural Development Project II, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this Loan to payments under the contract for *Rehabilitation of Udtong-Madanding-Kabulacan FMR.*
2. The *Municipality of Lambayong,* implementing partner of the Department of Agriculture, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for *Rehabilitation of Udtong-Madanding-Kabulacan FMR.* Completion of the Works is required by *215 calendar days.*
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Subject to exceptions stated in this Bidding Documents, only Bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of *Three Thousand Five Hundred Pesos.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before *August 16, 2007.*
7. The *Municipality of Lambayong* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on *1:00 P.M., August 01, 2007* at the following address: *Mayor Pedazur A. Guerrero Farmers' Training Center, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat.*
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before *9:00 A.M., August 17, 2007.* All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, certified (manager's or cashier's) check, bank guarantee and in an amount specified in the bid documents. Late bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on *August 17, 2007, 9:00 A.M. at Mayor Pedazur A. Guerrero Farmers' Training Center, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at Mayor Pedazur A. Guerrero Farmers' Training Center, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat at *9:00 A.M., August 17, 2007.*
9. The *Municipality of Lambayong* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

ELPIDIO R. RAMOS
Poblacion, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat
9802
Mayor Pedazur A. Guerrero Farmer's Training Center
Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat
Tel./Fax No.: 064 384 2624

(Sgd.) **ELPIDIO R. RAMOS**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – July 18, 2007)

CENTRAL PANGASINAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Carlos City, Pangasinan
Tel. # 532-2222 / 532-3146

INVITATION TO BID

The **Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative, Inc.** (CENPELCO) with office address at Padilla St., San Carlos City, Pangasinan invites all qualified bidders for the implementation of approved electrification projects of the Department of Energy (DoE) within the Municipality of Sual, Pangasinan pursuant to Energy Regulations No. 1-94, and section 66 of Republic Act (R.A) 9136 and Rule 29, Part A of Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9136 amounting to TWENTY MILLION SIX HUNDRED TWENTY ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY NINE PESOS and 13/100 (Php20,621,589.13).

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a. Three Phase - 5.560 kms.
b. Vee Phase - 1.710 kms.
c. Single Phase - 17.27 kms.
d. Open Secondary - 10.33 kms.
e. Under Built - 15.69 kms.

All interested parties shall submit Letter of intent together with their latest company profile and secure bid documents re: Staking sheets, bill of materials, material description and specification and scope of works to PBAC secretariat starting July 23, 2007. In addition, a non refundable fee of Seven Hundred Fifty Pesos (P750.00) shall be paid before securing said documents. Submission of sealed bid will be on **September 11, 2007 (Tuesday) at 2:00 PM (1400 hrs)** at CENPELCO main office, Padilla St., San Carlos City, Pangasinan wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representative. Prior to the bidding proper, your company's representatives are requested to inspect/assess the sites.

Request further to include in your sealed bid/proposal **period to complete the project, terms of payment, schedule of activities and materials and equipments specification** for evaluation purposes. Please submit BID BOND equivalent to two and one-half percent (2½%) of the total bid price if it is a cash or manager's check or if it is a surety bond it must be equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Bid bond less than the required amount will be automatically disqualified. Bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

CENPELCO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS THE BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) **RODRIGO F. CORPUZ**
PBAC Chairman

Noted by

(Sgd.) **ENGR. EDGARDO R. PIAMONTE**
Executive Officer/Project Supervisor

(PDI – July 15 & 18, 2007)

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OBITUARIES

VINCENT C. RAMOS

(July 16, 1922 - July 2, 2007)

of Laoag City and a US World War II veteran, died on July 2 in Panorama City, California.

His bereaved wife **Guillerma Ramos**, daughters **Araceli R. Llantada** and **Nanie Ramos**, son-in-law **Carlos T. Llantada**, granddaughter **Christine R. Llantada**, sister **Maria R. Malasig**, and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body arrived in the Philippines on July 13 and lies at his residence on Rizal Street, Barangay 29, Laoag City. Interment will be on July 21 at 7:30 a.m. at Ramon Catholic Cemetery, Laoag City.

A Message of Appreciation

We, the family of the late

BENJAMIN M. CAMPOMANES, SR.

14 September 1920 – 21 June 2007

express our heartfelt gratitude to those who condoled with us through their visits, flowers, cards, messages of sympathy, donations, offertory of Masses and prayers, attendance to his funeral rites and memorial services, and who in countless ways helped and comforted us during our moment of grief.

Please continue to pray for his eternal repose in heaven.

ROMBLON MUNICIPAL LIBRARY INAUGURATION

The Romblon Municipal Library, a joint project of the Lions Club International Foundation, Nagoya West Lions Club, Makati Golden Lions Club and the Municipality of Romblon, was inaugurated recently. Shown are (from left) Belinda TG Cariño, membership committee chair; District 301-A2 Governor Ramon A. Cariño; Mayor Leo G. Merida of Romblon, Romblon; MGLC president Geraldine T. Coloma; NWLC past president Sadao Kawase; and MGLC vice president Regina Laurel.

Meralco urged to raise supply deal with Napocor

Move seen to help make assets more attractive to buyers

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY is urging Manila Electric Co. to draw more power from National Power Corp. to boost the quality of the transition supply contracts (TSCs) that will be attached to the power plants that will be auctioned off this year.

"I'm looking forward to Meralco increasing its contracted volumes from Napocor as this can assist the power agency and PSALM (Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.) in improving the quality of the supply contracts that will be attached to the assets," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla told reporters.

Lotilla said the move would also shield Meralco's customers from the volatility of the spot market.

Meralco presently gets around 20 percent of its supply requirement from the wholesale electricity spot market, 45-55 percent from its independent power producers, and 25-35 percent from Napocor.

RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, requires distribution utilities to get at least 10 percent of their supply requirements from the WESM.

Lotilla said it would be better for Meralco's customers if all of its supply needs would be covered by bilateral supply contracts, such as that with Napocor, as this would mean less exposure to price volatility at the spot market.

The 10-percent WESM requirement, he said, could just come in to provide cover for "imbalances."

A source familiar with the matter said Meralco was in discussions with Napocor and the DOE for the possibility of transferring some of the contracted capacity from the WESM to the distribution utility's TSC with the state firm.

'Productive' bank lending up in May

By Daxim L. Lucas

BANK LENDING CONTINUED to accelerate in May as the effects of the central bank's scheme to encourage more commercial loans took hold over the summer.

In a statement, Bangko Sentral Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. said the outstanding loans of commercial, thrift and rural banks to "the productive sectors" of the economy grew by 6.7 percent in May, higher than the 6.1 percent in April.

Excluding funds parked with the central bank's overnight facility, the total loans extended by the banking system stood at P1.770 trillion in May, up from P1.762 trillion in April and P1.659 trillion in May 2006.

"There has been a pick-up in lending since December 2006, after the tiering system was put in place in November," he said.

Including the funds placed in the BSP's overnight borrowing facility, bank lending expanded at a slower rate of 3.6 percent year-on-year in May compared to the 12.1 percent in April.

By this measure, the end-May level stood at P1.951 trillion, slightly lower than the previous month's P2.046 trillion as banks moved their excess funds from the overnight window into the higher yielding special deposit accounts (SDAs).

The deceleration in aggregate bank lending was led by the financial institutions, real estate and business services sector, which grew by only 1 percent year-on-year in May from a 25.5-percent growth in the previous month.

This was due mainly to the lower volume of banks' overnight placements with the BSP as there was a shift in placements to the SDAs following the introduction of new monetary measures in early May.

Net of overnight placements, however, Firebs posted growth of 13.2 percent, from the 4.8 percent in April.

The central bank said lending to the farm sector grew by 5.1 percent, fup from the 2.1 percent growth in April.

TRO issued vs PRCI directors

THE MAKATI REGIONAL TRIAL Court issued on Monday an order stopping certain directors of Philippine Racing Club Inc. from transferring the ownership of the 26-hectare Sta. Ana race track in Makati to another company.

The temporary restraining order was issued in response to a complaint filed by a group of PRCI minority shareholders, who claimed that the planned swap of the race track property for shares in JTH Davies Holding Inc. "lacked full disclosure" and was prejudicial to PRCI's primary business purpose.

In a statement, the minority shareholders said the defendants (PRCI directors) not only approved the exchange of the property for JTH shares but had surrendered to the executive committee the determination and approval of the terms and conditions of the exchange, notwithstanding the adverse consequence of such a move to the corporation.

They said the directors' move was not only irregular, but also prejudicial and inimical to the interests of the corporation.

The minority shareholders claimed the management neither briefed nor furnished the board with any supporting documents regarding the acquisition of the property. Instead, the corporation's president merely sought the approval of a pro-forma resolution on the acquisition by JTH.

In its decision, the court said the right of PRCI to the Makati property must be respected and maintained. It also noted that the swap of the Makati property with shares of JTH will definitely strip off PRCI of its earning assets.

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GSIS: The CTPL monopoly

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

BEFORE HIS SEAT WAS HARDLY warm, newly reappointed Secretary of Transportation and Communications Leandro R. Mendoza signed, last July 5, Department Order No. 2007-28. When you cut through the 18 introductory "whereases" and the rest of the verbiage, the order requires every motor vehicle owner in the whole archipelago to buy his Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance policy from the Government Service Insurance System.

As everyone knows, when you register your vehicle at the Land Transportation Office (LTO), you are required under the Insurance Code to file a CTPL policy, embodied in a document called Certificate of Cover (COC). With the help of your agent or broker, you buy the COC from any of the more than 90 insurance firms.

Not anymore. Under Secretary Mendoza's Order, you should buy the COC only from the GSIS.

The proposed monopoly has the entire nonlife industry in an uproar. Since there are constitutional issues involved, the insurance companies, brokers and agents are gearing up for a gigantic battle at the Supreme Court. The industry can well afford to pit the most prestigious and expensive law firm(s) in the land against the Solicitor General. It should be quite a show to watch.

In the meantime, I shall discuss the controversy from the standpoint of the man in the middle -- the vehicle owner.

I have a client with a 4-year old Toyota sedan. The policy I designed includes own damage coverage with theft, plus voluntary property damage third party liability, and, finally, personal accident for six unnamed passengers. This year's premium is P13,110 plus taxes of P3,238.42 for a total of P16,348.42.

Then, there is the separate CTPL policy where the annual premium is P448.75 and taxes of P111.25 for a total of P560.00.

Both policies are taken from the same insurance company. There are practical reasons for this. First, in both contracts, you deal only with the same party of the first part.

More important, insurance is a game of clout. Because of the bigger-premium policy, and all the other business I bring to the insurance company, my client and I have considerable clout with the company.

My client is a valued client of the company. If a problem comes up in a CTPL claim, the company will most likely pay it without much ado.

Under Secretary Mendoza's monopoly, my client will have to buy his CTPL policy from the GSIS. In an instant, my client and I lose the clout that we wield because of the bigger-premium policy and the rest of the portfolio of business I bring to the company.

More ominous, if my client ever has a CTPL claim with the GSIS, and he is not happy with the service, he still has to stay with the GSIS. This is the reason why monopolies, by their very nature, are notoriously inefficient.

Moving the bigger-premium policy to the GSIS is not an option. I would have to be out of my mind to do that. If my client has an own damage claim, collecting it from the GSIS would be like pulling teeth. I know this from my own painful experience.

There are surely over a million cars in the same situation as my client's.

Finally, part of the premium the car owner pays is the built-in commission of the agent/broker. Under the monopoly, the car owner still pays the commission but does not enjoy the services of an agent/broker because the GSIS, by law, is not allowed to deal with any agent or broker.

Admittedly, there are serious problems in the present CTPL system, the solutions to which are long overdue. But Secretary Mendoza's cure is worse than the disease.

No funds for Customs . . .

From page B1

have yet to receive their rewards. The Department of Finance, head agency of the BOC, said the government failed to take into account the need to allot a budget for incentives when the 2007 national budget was made.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the DOF would discuss with the Department of Budget and Management whether the two agencies could ask Congress to provide a supplemental budget to cover the incentives for 2006.

The other option is for the DOF and the DBM to include in the proposed 2008 national budget an allocation for the unpaid incentives for 2006 and the incentives that will be due for the 2007 revenue collection performance. Teves noted that the economic managers were already preparing the proposed 2008 national budget.

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BUSINESS

IMF to assess developments on RP's fiscal front

Meet to focus on revenue collection, expenditures

By Michelle V. Remo

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND officials will be arriving next week to assess the country's fiscal and macroeconomic environment.

According to a government source, IMF representatives will be meeting with the country's economic managers to discuss the government's expenditures and revenue collection effort, as well as the economy's standing based on the success or failure in attaining growth targets.

Officials from the Department of Finance, National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Budget and Management and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will be participating in talks with IMF representatives.

The source clarified that the visit of the IMF was not part of the post-program monitoring (PPM) that used to cover the Philippines until recently. The country exited from the PPM last April after it posted significant fiscal improvements last year.

Under the PPM, the IMF conducts periodic review of a country's macroeconomic and fiscal environments, and then provides policy recommendations for reforms.

IMF member-countries whose obligations to the foreign lender exceeds 100 percent of quota are subject to the PPM. A country that has a lower amount of liabilities may still remain under the PPM if its economy is believed to be vulnerable to various risks.

The Philippines could have graduated from the PPM as early as 2003. As of November of last year, the Philippines' outstanding obligations to the IMF stood at only SDR 229.67 million, which was equivalent to 26.1 percent of the quota given to the country.

SDR stands for special drawing rights, the currency being used by the IMF.

However, both the Philippine government and the IMF agreed to keep the country under the PPM until it posted substantial gains in the fiscal sector.

Last year, the government was able to trim its budget deficit to only P64.8 billion from the previous year's P146.8 billion.

Authorities believed that the lower deficit figure could be reason enough for the country to exit from the PPM.

But the fiscal picture for the first half of the year is not as encouraging as last year's. Preliminary report from the DOF showed that the deficit for the first half reached P37.7 billion, higher than the P31.3-billion official ceiling set for the six-month period.

The first half target was set with the goal of keeping the deficit for the entire year at only P63 billion. The breach in the first half's deficit limit was blamed on poor revenue collection.

Revenue authorities, however, said they would be stepping up efforts to shore up tax collection in the second half to recover from the tax shortfall.

The source said the IMF representatives are expected to inquire about the first-half fiscal performance and the reason behind the collection shortfall.

The IMF normally provides policy recommendations to help the government address fiscal problems. The government could then either heed or junk the recommendations, the source said.

It may be recalled that it was the IMF that recommended the government to push through with proposals to raise the value-added tax rate and expand its coverage. The VAT Reform law, which raised the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent and expanded the coverage of the tax, was considered to be the centerpiece of the Arroyo administration's fiscal reform agenda.

The implementation of the RVAT law, although criticized by consumer advocates, was said to have helped in substantially trimming the deficit last year.

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Insurance regulator approves sale of Berkley portfolio to Prudential

THE INSURANCE COMMISSION has approved the sale of the portfolio of Berkley International Life Insurance Co. Inc. to Philippine Prudential Life Insurance Co.

The approval will pave the way for the transfer of Berkley's assets and liabilities to Prudential, which will now service the claims of Berkley's policyholders.

The deal between the two insurance companies was formally inked last Thursday, following an announcement by the Insurance Commission in May that it had suspended Berkley's license to operate due to solvency problems.

The commission had said Berkley's solvency margin fell below the requirement after it contracted a P300-million loan from Union Bank and used $7 million worth of assets, in the form of bonds, as collateral.

The use of bonds as collateral impaired Berkley's assets, placing its policyholders at a disadvantage, the Insurance Commission said.

The regulator has been tightening its watch on insurance firms, particularly over their compliance with solvency and capitalization requirements.

According to the Insurance Commission, it is necessary to protect current policyholders so that more people will be encouraged to buy insurance.

Denis Cabucos, chief of licensing division at the Insurance Commission, said in an interview that the deal between the two firms will serve to protect holders of Berkley's insurance policies, now that future claims have become part of Prudential's liabilities.

Cabucos said that Berkley's license as an insurance company lapsed on June 30. The company did not apply for a renewal.

Gregorio Mercado, president of Prudential, said the firm's move to buy Berkley's portfolio was part of a plan to expand business. Without disclosing the sale price, Mercado said the deal was worth the money as it increased Prudential's business by 50 percent.

Earlier, the two insurance firms announced that the portfolio transfer includes 300 individual insurance policies and about 80,000 certificates of group life insurance, and P100 million worth of reserves, mostly in the form of government securities.

Mercado noted that Prudential expected to increase its premium collection by 50 percent this year over last year's, partly aided by its business expansion programs.

Danny Villanueva, former vice president of Berkley, said his group intended to stay in the insurance business, proposing to serve as Prudential's marketing arm. Mercado said Prudential was open to the proposal. *Michelle V. Remo*

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Isuzu unveils 2007 edition 'global pickup'

TAKEDA said the 2007 D-Max is not only powerful but is also fuel-efficient, emits much cleaner emissions and definitely better looking.

Text and photo by Charles E. Buban

IF SUBARU EMERGED AS a world-renowned vehicle brand because of its rally-winning Impreza or the Volkswagen for its iconic Beetle, then Isuzu could thank its D-Max for ably carrying its name in the highly competitive international pickup market.

"The D-Max is one of Isuzu's most successful models and has captured the fancy of pickup lovers not only in Thailand but in many parts of the world since its launch five years ago," announced Tri Petch Isuzu (Thailand) sales director Panatda Chennavasin who recently visited the country to personally introduce the 2007 edition of the pickup model, which is manufactured in her country.

Perhaps no other person could attest to D-Max's sales performance than Chennavasin herself who shared that ever since Isuzu started its production of the pickup in 1974, its cumulative sales volume has already reached 1.54 million units.

10 consecutive years

"While the D-Max has been No. 1 for 10 consecutive years (since 1996) and set the record two years ago for registering the biggest annual sales volume of 163,153 units in Thailand, it was also exported, finding popularity in 80 countries worldwide," she said.

While D-Max is yet to achieve such a phenomenal record here, Isuzu Philippines Corp. president Keiji Takeda said the pickup has sold well in the Philippines and has been a favorite among Filipinos.

"In fact, the D-Max has been a People's Choice awardee for being the "Pickup of the Year" for three consecutive years beginning 2005," Takeda shared.

Innovate and improve

He also added that IPC is constantly finding ways to innovate and improve this global product.

"With the introduction of the 2007 D-Max (which is also sold in other Asian countries, Australia, Europe and the Middle East) we strongly believe that we have a strong package that has the potential to top the country's pickup market," Takeda said.

The 2007 D-Max is now powered by a new type of engine: a 144-horsepower, 3.0-liter, common-rail direct-injection diesel engine with turbo intercooler.

Most advanced

The CRDi is one of the most advanced diesel technologies in the world that combined both performance and fuel economy.

In fact this type of engine technology is about 15 percent to 20 percent more environment-friendly than conventional diesel engines not to mention that they exhibit improved engine fuel efficiency, reduced noise and vibrations.

This engine could be found in all the variants of the 2007 D-Max (the top of the line 4x2 LS and LX) except the base model (LT), which has an 80-horsepower, 2.5-liter direct-injection diesel engine.

"Not only is the 2007 D-Max as reliable and durable as it has always been, I am proud to say it is now even more powerful and definitely better looking, thanks to its upgraded exteriors as well as interior amenities," Takeda said.

The LT is priced at P805,000, while the LX manual sells for P925,000. The LS manual and automatic have introductory prices of P1.015 million and P1.075 million, respectively.

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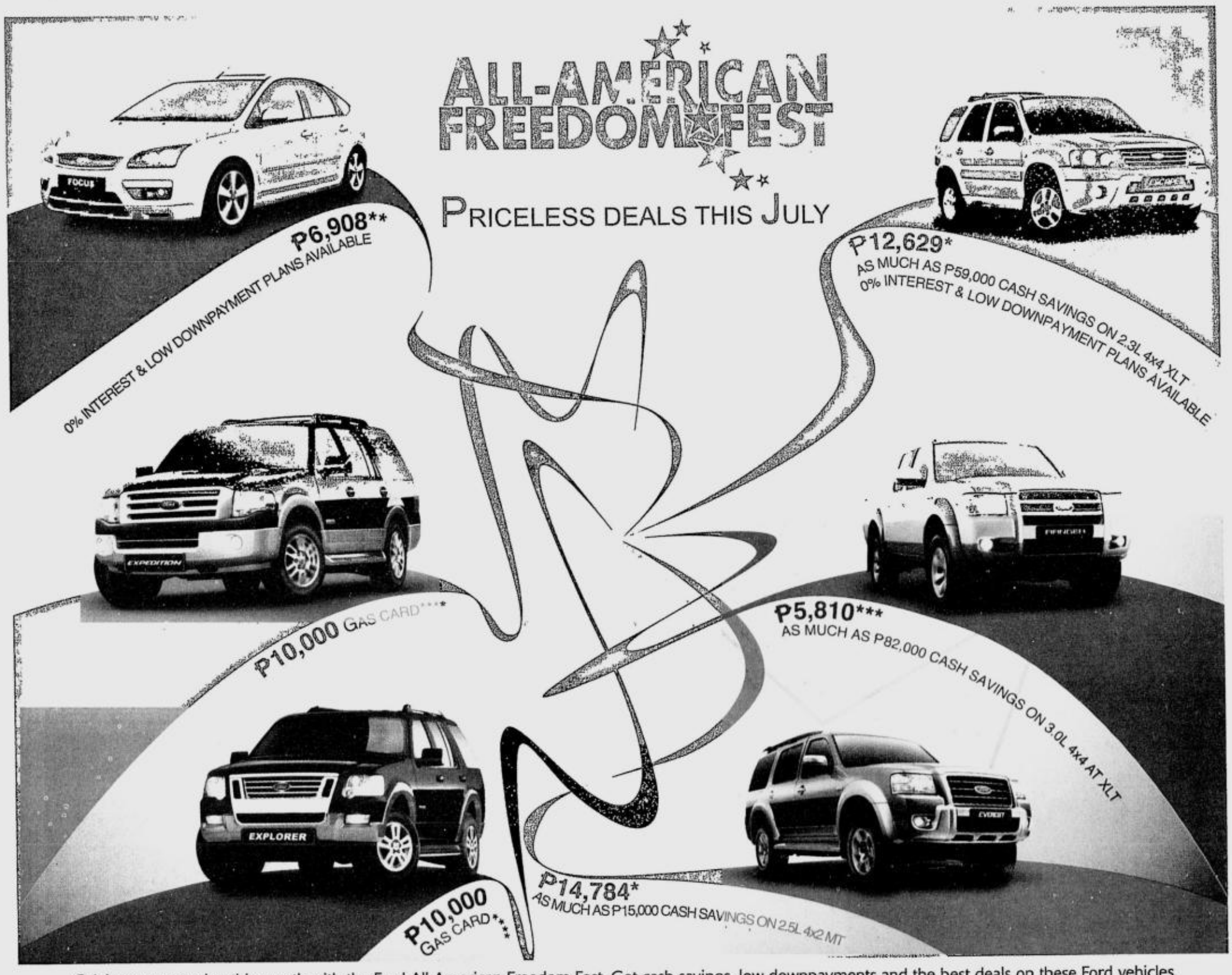

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Free our roads

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

DRIVING DOWN A STRETCH OF HIGHway in Holland in the late '90s, I found myself confounded by my Dutch friend's request to make an immediate stop. What he was asking me to do was counterintuitive at that very moment. Ahead of our car lay flowing traffic cruising along around 110 kph and I was being asked to stop the car for no apparent reason. Already the vehicle in front of us was by now beginning to slow. Dumbfounded, I had no choice but to slow down also.

We stopped as if we were at an intersection with a traffic light, our borrowed dark blue E36 fourth or fifth from the front of this instant queue. In the middle of asking if there had been an accident I did not see, my passenger got out of the car and lit up a cigarette. Taking his cue, I too disembarked and lit up. The view I got when I glanced forward further perplexed me, for a couple of hundred meters in front of us, the six or eight lane highway was empty.

Halfway through my cigarette, my passenger snuffed his smoke, got back in the cabin and began to belt up. Seconds later we were on our way and our drive continued as if nothing had happened. We got to our destination, quaint Volendam, and over chunks of fatty almost gelatinous pickled herring, I finally got my explanation.

My first intelligent highway

I'd just driven on my first intelligent highway. Sensors measured traffic flow and predicted potential jams with the chaotic ebb and flow of vehicles. Rather than allow traffic to build up massively and block off highway exits, a computer deliberately slowed groups of vehicles that would otherwise just add to the mayhem and congestion.

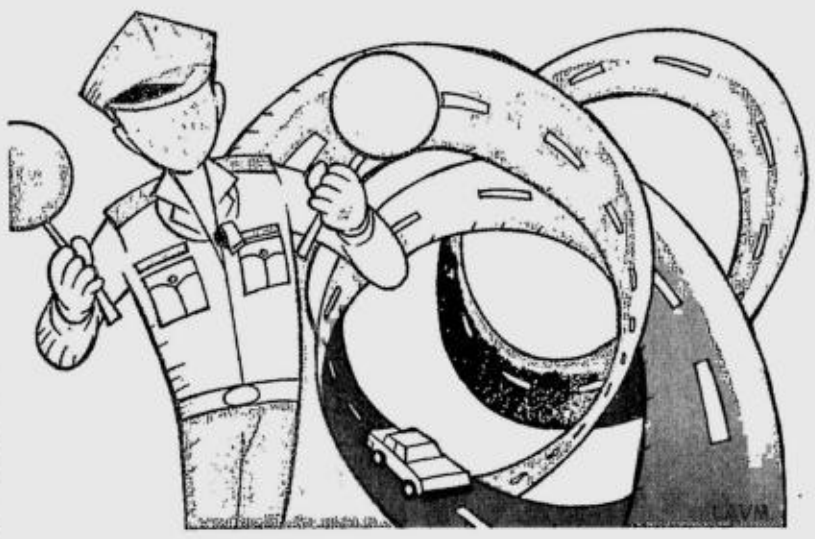
If situations got really bad then entire sections of the highway would be asked to stop, the buildup allowed to clear and only then would cars be allowed to continue. At that moment Holland jumped to the top of my really-cool-places list and this was still hours before I stumbled into my first coffeehouse, scout's honor.

Since then traffic information and management systems have amazed me. From the simple, dedicated frequency, traffic advisory radio stations in the remotest parts of the United States to the intricate and strangely hypnotic LED information billboards that dot the Tokyo Ring Roads, something just draws me to take a long, doe-eyed look at these systems.

Completely alien

The biggest reason for this interest is that such driving and traveling aids are completely alien to me as a Filipino. In a nation whose capital has at times been strangled blue by traffic, you'd think that even the simplest real-time information systems would be available.

Fine, there are those drive time traffic updates on radio and they work well enough. Time and time again they've helped in determining which route to avoid or take but the info one gets from this service isn't at all constant or real time. For hard intelligence on what our road network looks like, one has to go to extreme measures. Just how extreme? How about calling someone actually in a helicopter circling the city during rush hour? I've seen it done but without my own friendly neighborhood eye in the sky, something a little less dramatic will have to suffice.



Lack of infrastructure

Several systems have had tried to get around the lack of infrastructure plaguing an effective roll out of a traffic information system for drivers. There used to be at some point community-based web sites where members could feed real-time information about traffic they experienced or saw. With advances in personal mobile connections to the web such an endeavor could provide a stop gap until government or big business decides that traffic information is something worth spending on.

A multibillion-dollar, intelligent road network is not what is being proposed here, though the idea does leave me giddily pink. Even a simple system of signs could get the traffic flowing in the right direction. If we can put hundreds of "sorry for roadwork" signs out on our streets then why can't we place the odd detour sign system that changes on a hourly basis—one tiny step that could clear the way for freer-flowing Philippine roads.

Debunking the most common myths about today's diesel engines

EVEREST

MENTION "DIESEL" AND BLACK smoke, unpleasant odor and noise easily come into mind. Diesel engines are saddled with a lot of myths and misconceptions, with several motorists haunted by its unrefined past.

Gone are the days, however, of harshness and clatter associated with the old diesel engines. According to the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, a trade association of car and light truck manufacturers, technological advances have resulted in clean diesel automobiles that offer greater fuel economy, while delivering the performance and durability the consumers demand. Diesel has become "clean diesel" through advanced engine and emission control technologies in line with ultra-low sulfur fuel.

The organization further states that compared to their gasoline counterparts, the emerging new generation of clean diesel vehicles will offer greater fuel economy while delivering better performance.

Myths and facts

However, some old perceptions about diesels still abound, especially in a country whose majority of motorists use gasoline. The antidote is for consumers to educate themselves on the myths and facts about today's diesel engines. Here are some:

Myth #1: Diesels are noisy, especially at idle.

Fact #1: There used to be a lot of truth to this statement with old diesel engines, but new ones are built with a feature called "pilot injection," which virtually eliminates the clattering sound. Many of these diesels are so quiet that it takes an educated ear to recognize that the engine is a diesel when it goes by or is stopped at a stoplight.

Myth #2: Diesels are slow and sluggish.

Fact #2: Vehicles powered by turbo-diesels actually develop more torque at the lower rev range than equivalent gasolinepetrol engines. Responsive and powerful, they are capable of accelerating quickly, and they have high-torque output for climbing grades or sustained high-speed operation.

Myth #3: You have to let a turbo diesel engine idle for two minutes before you turn it off.

Fact #3: This is a current myth that has a basis of fact stemming from many years ago. In the early days of turbochargers, a two-minute cool down at idle allowed the turbocharger to dissipate any remaining spinning inertia and the oil circulation cooled the bearing. Today's turbo-diesels are a different story. There is really no reason to "cool down" a turbo-diesel these days, but you won't hurt anything by doing it either.

Myth #4: Diesels are dirty and smoky.

Fact #4: Diesel smoke is composed of soot from unburned or partially burned fuel. Thanks to modern computerized fuel control and management, coupled with ultra-high-pressure common rail fuel injection, visible diesel emissions have been greatly reduced. As for dirty, no smoke means no soot, and no soot means no dirt.

Myth #5: Diesel exhaust smells bad.

Fact #5: The smell associated with diesel engines in the past came from incomplete combustion, smoke and high sulfur content in diesel fuel. As mentioned above, modern electronic fuel management has dramatically improved combustion and greatly reduced emissions. The introduction of ultra low sulphur diesel fuel will further assist to reduce diesel emissions.

Myth #6: Diesel fuel has less energy than gasoline.

Fact #6: Diesel fuel has around 11 percent more heat energy than gasoline. A liter of gasoline has about 31.9 mega joules per liter, whereas a typical liter of diesel has about 35.6 mega joules per liter. Therefore more work can be done for each liter of diesel resulting in greater fuel efficiency.

Myth #7: You can't use synthetic oil in a diesel.

Fact #7: Synthetic oils can be, and are, used in many diesel engines. Every engine manufacturer has specific oil recommendations, and as long as the synthetic oil meets the American Petroleum Institute (API) rating recommended for that engine, it is acceptable. For most light-duty diesel trucks including the Ranger, this means a minimum of API CD, CE or CF. Some people think synthetic oils will void the warranty on a turbo-diesel, but again, if you're using the oil recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer (see your owner's manual), there will no problem.

RANGER

Gradually changing

With diesel's dirty image gradually changing, the local automotive industry is already transitioning to more advanced engine systems. While before, diesel is used to mainly power trucks, buses and construction equipment, it now sparks renewed interest in passenger vehicles.

The stigma continues to fade as more and more motorists discover the new diesel engine's benefits. Greater power and performance are achieved by the fuel being injected directly into the combustion chamber multiple times per cycle under extremely high pressure from a common-rail pump. The technology ensures the best possible mixture of fuel and air in the cylinders, resulting in efficient combustion for high torque and excellent fuel economy while also reducing engine noise and vibration.

Today, Ford Group Philippines has two of the most powerful diesel-fed vehicles in its portfolio—the Ford Ranger and Ford Everest. To make the coming months more exciting for Filipino motorists, the company aims to bring outstanding levels of refinement and driving enjoyment that are normally associated only with gasoline-fed engines.

Winning combination

With the new turbo-diesel common-rail direct-injection (TDCi) engines, Ford has achieved the winning combination of delivering substantially better performance while using markedly less fuel and producing fewer harmful emissions.

This new technology brings to life Ford's tagline, "Make Every Day Exciting," which expresses Ford's renewed commitment to deliver new vehicles that are innovative, stylish and fun to drive, giving their owners a sense of pride, as well as provide excellent value in terms of overall cost ownership.

Motolite sponsors Philippine solar car project

MOTOLITE, THE INDUSTRY LEADER IN AUtomotive battery products in the Philippines, is one of the sponsors of Sinag, the first-ever Filipino-made solar-powered car. Being developed by a team of scientists and engineering students from the De La Salle University, Sinag will be the official Philippine entry to the Panasonic World Solar Challenge, the world's largest solar race, slated on Oct. 21-28 in Australia.

The one-seater Sinag will be powered by Philippine-manufactured solar cells, which are graded among the most efficient in the world. Photovoltaic cells made of carbon fiber and Nomex (aramid fiber) will make the car as light as 150 kg, to allow it to achieve faster speeds. It will compete against entries from 20 other countries in a 3,021-kilometer race across the Australian continent—from Darwin in the Northern Territory to Adelaide, capital of South Australia.

Ultimate quest

Now on its 20th year, the World Solar Challenge is the ultimate quest in sustainable energy, which aims to promote and celebrate educational and technical excellence, and draw attention to the imperatives of sustainable transport.

According to Prof. Rene Fernandez of the DLSU mechanical engineering department and head of the technical team, the basic design for Sinag's monocoque shell will integrate solar cells on its upper surface. "We already have the materials and equipment ready and hopefully, we finish before the October race," Fernandez said.

Actively involved

Motolite's Ernest Estrera notes, "Motolite is actively involved in protecting the environment and has been at the forefront of community-based recycling and health campaigns. We are honored to be part of the Sinag project, not only because it supports the search for clean, renewable sources of energy but also because it showcases Filipino talent and ingenuity."

Motolite is produced by Ramcar, an all-Filipino conglomerate that is at par with the world's best in battery manufacturing, sales and distribution, machine building and engineering solutions, business enterprise solutions, and recycling and environmental protection.

Other Sinag sponsors include Ford Group Philippines, ePLDT Ventus, Philippine Airlines, San Miguel Corp., Shell and SunPower.

VEHICLE LIGHTING SYSTEM

Primal Enterprises Corp., one of the country's leading distributor of car accessories and products, has recently introduced Xenonworx, its latest line of high-intensity discharge vehicle lighting system based on the inert gas, xenon. Launched during the the recent Trans Sport Show, Xenonworx could simulate daylight at night while consuming minimal amount of electricity and lasting longer than most types of vehicle lighting systems. Based in Quezon City (Banawe corner Calamba streets), the company said Xenonworx lamps are water-resistant and is available in different color range (varying hues of yellow, blue and pink). All Xenonworx products have a 27-month warranty, the company added.

Latest auto trends at 1st Philippine Int'l Motor Show

THE 1ST PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL MOtor Show, organized by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi), is all set to unveil its latest products, accessories, innovations and trends to the public on Aug. 9-12 at the World Trade Center, Pasay City.

Elizabeth H. Lee, president of Campi, said, "With our inaugural motoring event, we will demonstrate the local industry's strength as an integral part of the growing local and regional auto landscape."

The public-at-large may expect a high-caliber show that will present the latest vehicle models available in the market today, a dynamic program of events and promotional activities, and the involvement of all the major players in the auto industry. The 1st Philippine International Motor Show is touted not only to become a landmark event in Manila but, even more important, consolidate its status as the country's largest and most prestigious auto-related indoor gathering.

Market needs

Confronting the challenges of the new era, topnotch auto manufacturers, assemblers and importers, along with the allied industries, will pay closer attention to the market needs of local consumers for vehicles that provide more value for money, the utmost in reliability and a lower maintenance cost per kilometer usage.

Campi is also set to promote public awareness to the concerted efforts of car manufacturers and assemblers in the country to draft and formulate measures to help reduce air pollution by supporting the Clean Air Act project of the government. This, according to Campi is being done through the introduction of energy-efficient automobiles such as hybrid cars and clean-burning diesel-powered vehicles.

Showcases

Aside from showcasing the latest product technologies, including a wide array of passenger cars, sport utility vehicles, concept cars, high-performance cars and commercial vehicles, the 1st Philippine International Motor Show will also attract visitors to the different conference programs and special attractions like the exhibition of collectible auto memorabilia, at least 25 years old (1982 and older), whose marques are represented in the show.

The inaugural motor show will also feature the 1st PIMS Automotive Design Competition, which is open to all industrial design and engineering students in the country, not to mention technical and advocacy seminars, test drives, special auto financing rates for show visitors and a host of other services. Another crowd draw, courtesy of participating automotive manufacturers and assemblers will be the display of concept or prototype vehicles loaded with the latest advancement in automotive and design technology.

The place to check out

According to lawyer Homer Mariano, Campi secretary general, for potential car buyers who would want to see all the latest vehicle models—from cars to SUVs under one roof—this inaugural motoring event is the place to check out.

Prominent companies that are joining the show includes Columbian Autocar Corp. (Kia), General Motors Automobiles Phils. Inc., Honda Cars Phils., Hyundai Asia Resources, Isuzu Phils. Corp., Mitsubishi Motors Phils. Corp., Nissan Motor Phils. Inc., PGA Cars (Porsche and Audi), Scandinavian Motors Corp. (Volvo), Suzuki Motor Phils., Toyota Motor Phils. Corp. and Universal Motors Corp. (Nissan light commercial vehicles).

Safer affordable SUVs

THE 3.0 V6 Mitsubishi Outlander GLS Sport

PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA

THE 2.7 liter V6 Suzuki Grand Vitara

THE SUBARU Forester 2.5 XT

WHEN MITSUBISHI MOTORS Philippines launched three 2007 sport utility vehicles last April, they wittingly or unwittingly set a new safety trend for SUVs sold in the Philippines. All three—the new Pajero, Endeavor and Outlander—not only have antilock braking systems (ABS) with electronic brake force distribution (EBD) on 4-wheel disc brakes, they each have six airbags and stability control as standard equipment.

Sure, you might say, any SUV costing over P2.5 million like the Pajero should have six airbags and stability control. But the 4WD V6 Outlander GLS Sport costs less than two million—P1.688 million, to be exact—yet it has two dual-stage front SRS airbags, side and curtain airbags plus Active Stability Control and ABS with EBD on disc brakes front and rear.

Not high-end

I'm not talking here about high-end SUVs like the BMW X5 and X3 Sport Activity Vehicles that have eight airbags and Dynamic Stability Control and cost at least P3.190 million or P5.25 million each. Nor about the Mercedes-Benz ML 350 Sport (P5.750 million), Volvo XC90 (at least P3.985 million) or Eddie Bauer Ford Expedition (P2.999 million), all of which have six airbags and some kind of stability/traction control as standard equipment.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

I'm talking about affordable SUVs. Assuming that SUVs costing from P1.6 million to P1.8 million are considered affordable these days in a country with a booming stock market and low peso-US dollar exchange rate, Mitsubishi Motors has challenged competitors with the intro of the safety-packed 2007 Outlander Sport.

For example, Mitsubishi's compact SUV costs P97,000 less than the 4x4 Toyota RAV4 (P1.875 million) which also has six airbags, 4-wheel disc brakes and ABS with EBD but no stability control. While the Outlander Sport costs P25,000 more than the 4x4 common rail diesel 3.0-liter Toyota Fortuner (P1.663 million), the latter has only two airbags, two disc brakes (the rear brakes are drums) and no stability or traction control.

Best Compact SUV

The P1.65 million Subaru Forester 2.5 XT all-wheel-drive, which won the Best Compact SUV of the Year title at the Car of the Year Awards last March, has four airbags, ABS with EBD on 4-wheel disc brakes and a Vehicle Dynamics Control System.

The P1.570 million 2.7-liter V6 2007 Suzuki Grand Vitara qualifies for the safer affordable SUV category since it has six airbags, electronic stability program (ESP), ABS with EBD and front ventilated disc brakes—but unfortunately, drum brakes at the rear.

4 airbags

Meanwhile, the 2007 2.4 Real Time 4WD Honda CR-V, which at P1.450 million costs P425,000 less than the 4x4 RAV4, has four airbags and VSA (vehicle stability assist) plus brake assist aside from 4-wheel disc brakes and ABS with EBD.

Also with four airbags (dual front and two side thorax) is the P1.580 million 2007 4x4 Ford Everest XLT 3.0-liter common rail diesel along with ABS with EBD. But, like the Fortuner, the Everest has drum brakes at the rear and no stability control. The lower-priced 4x 2 Everest XLS has only two airbags.

No stability control

The P1.388 million 2007 Ford Escape 2.3 XLT 4x4 has 4-wheel disc brakes, ABS with EBD and brake assist, but alas! only two airbags and no stability control. The P1.147 million 4x2 Mazda Tribute, the Escape's cousin, is similarly equipped.

Ditto the Nissan X-Trail, whether it be the 2.5-liter 4WD (P1.380 million) or the manual transmission (MT) 2.0-liter 4x2 variant (P1.160 million). And the 3.0-liter diesel Isuzu Alterra which ranges in price from P1.475 million to P1.658 million.

Except for the Hyundai Vera Cruz, the Korean SUVs cannot compare in the safety department. The CRDi (common rail direct injection) diesel variants of the Hyundai Tucson (P1.078 million for the 4x2 and P1.198 million for the 4x4) have Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and 4-wheel disc brakes with ABS and EBD, but only one airbag. The 4x2 gasoline MT (P898K) has no ESC and drum brakes at the rear.

SANTA FE. Both the 2.7-liter V6 gasoline (P1.588M) and the 2.2 CRDi (P1.528M) variants of the Hyundai Santa Fe have ESC and ABS with EBD, but the diesel unit has only one airbag compared to the gasoline's two.

The 3.0-liter V6 CRDi Vera Cruz saves the day for Hyundai with six airbags, ESC and 4-wheel disc brakes with ABS and EBD. However, it costs over two million bucks so it does not qualify as affordable.

The 2.5-liter CRDi Kia Sorento (P1.450M for the EX CRDi AT) has only two airbags and ABS but no stability control. Worse still, the P969K 2.0-liter Kia Sportage has no airbag and no stability control although it has 4-wheel disc brakes and ABS.

Summing up, the safer affordable 2007 SUVs are the Mitsubishi Outlander V6 GLS Sport, the 2.5 Subaru Forester XT, the 2.7 V6 Suzuki Grand Vitara and the 2.4 Honda CR-V 4WD.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Well-behaved women rarely make history.

PNP AVAILS OF PETRON FLEET CARD

Petron's VP for Marketing Jose K. Campos (right) describes the unique benefits and special advantages of the Petron Fleet Card to PNP Director General Oscar Calderon during ceremonies marking the first use of the Petron Fleet Card by the PNP recently in Petron Bel-Aire Square in Makati City. The move is in line with the PNP's ongoing Transformation program aimed at improving its administrative and operational processes. The Petron Fleet Card, the first of its kind to use microchip technology, will enable the PNP to efficiently manage its fleet of vehicles since the card can be programmed to define product and purchase limits, making it easier to budget and monitor fuel expenses. It is accepted in more than 500 Petron stations nationwide.

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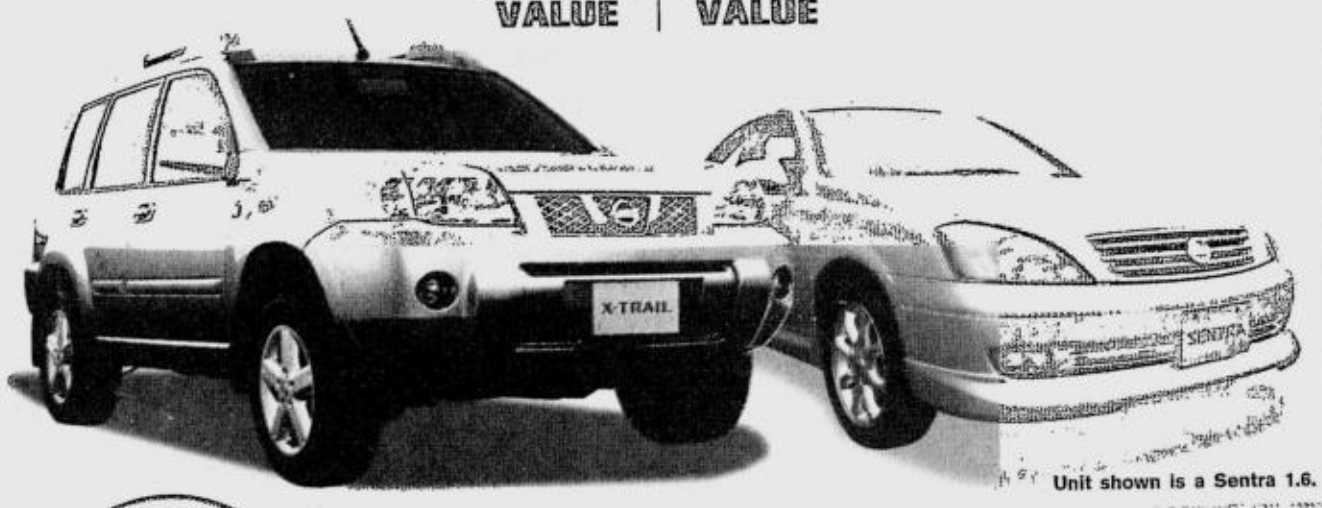

Unit shown is a Sentra 1.6.

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X-TRAIL 2.5 4x4 250	1,270,000	254,000	23,348	635,000	14,593
X-TRAIL 2.5 4x4 250X	1,380,000	276,000	25,371	690,000	15,857
SENTRA 1.6 GSX MT	750,000	150,000	13,329	375,000	8,158
SENTRA 1.6 GS AT	835,000	167,000	14,891	417,500	9,135
SENTRA 1.3 AT	660,000	132,000	12,134	330,000	7,584
SENTRA 1.3 MT PWR	630,000	126,000	11,582	315,000	7,239

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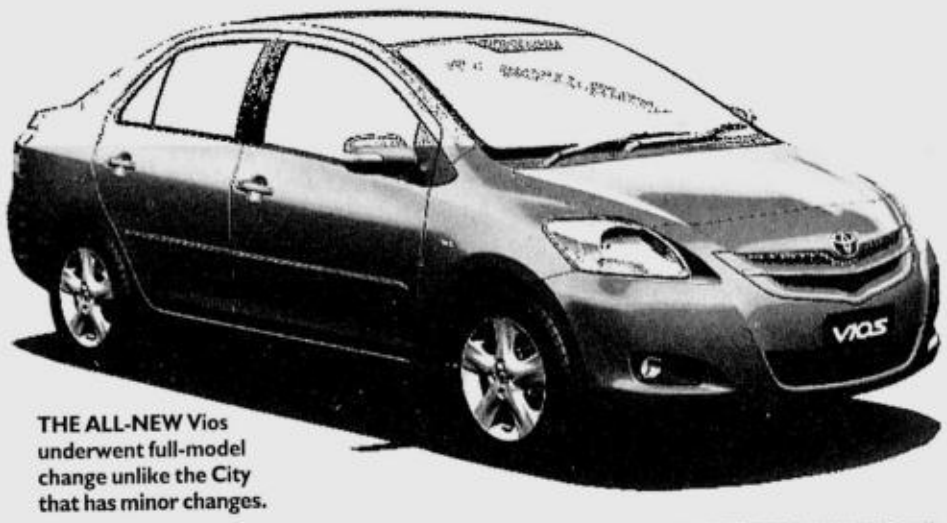
New Vios makes it easier to drive around the city

REDESIGNED with new enhancements, the City has upgraded features.



THE ALL-NEW Vios underwent full-model change unlike the City that has minor changes.

By Tessa R. Salazar

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT that the Toyota Vios in your hands was "everything" (remember the still lithe Britney Spears squeaking "Vios... It's everything"?), those crafty engineers in Toyota decided that it wasn't really everything just yet.

So they've just come up with a new Vios. What do we call it, now? "It's everything-er"? Oh well, as we wait for the new Vios to break out in the Philippine market by end-August, and before Vios fanatics make an iPhone-ic beeline to the reservation list in Toyota dealerships, here's a "tale of the tape" look at the new Vios—a quick peek even before you excitedly insert that key into the ignition.

The new Vios has a longer wheel base than the current Vios and the Honda City, wider treads both up front and rear than the current Vios and the City, and with a cabin now 120 mm longer than the current model (though the overall length is extended only by 15 mm), the new Vios is even longer than the Altis or cars a category above.

Features

The new Vios features a V-shaped line in the front end. This extends from the hood to the grille and then to the bumper providing a fresher, bolder design up front

The rear combination lamps' round shapes stress a 3-dimensional voluminous rear end. The character lines of the hood and the side run parallel to each other to exude dynamism—unusual for sedans in this class.

And with bigger dimensions for wide-door opening, particularly in the front seat, the new Vios and its hyped-about specs make it supposedly a breeze to drive.

The driver's ergonomic seat now has a lever-type height adjuster, unlike that of the current Vios and the City, both of which have knob-type adjusters. The new Vios has the gate-type shift lever, and an electronically powered steering wheel, which the makers stressed is ideal for both city and long-distance driving.

Also take note of the new Vios' integrated turn signal lamps, electronic retractable outside rear-view mirrors, larger-surface mirrors, printed-type antenna, and rear reflectors.

The larger mirror surfaces help reduce blind spots and identify obstacles during parking and lane changing.

What customers really want

Toyota Motor Corp. chief engineer Yasuyuki Kawamoto stressed that his team took into consideration the key phrase "Global Small Stylish Saloon" in the development of the all-new Vios. "We looked into the smallest details to give customers what they really want."

Kawamoto said the Vios' new bumper-integrated front grille, integrated side-turn signal lamps and rear bumper-mounted reflectors provide "a more modern and stylish look."

He added that the longer cabin legroom, flat passenger floor and front and rear headrests "guarantee a relaxed drive and ride."

The safety highlights are the dual front airbags, ABS (antilock brake system), EBD (electronic brake distribution) and Brake Assist. For model-specific features, the new Vios comes with dual-front SRS airbags for the G Grade. There's also the pedestrian injury-reduction technology with impact absorbing areas around the fender, cowl panel and hood.

For grades G and E, ABS is integrated in the vehicle coupled with Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist (BA).

VIOS' optitron meters, auto sound leveling stereo and metallic middle console, steering with stereo command

Honda City latest update

Meanwhile, chief competitor City comes with newly designed alloy wheels for both the 1.5-liter and 1.3-liter variants. The plan of the 15-inch 8-spoke wheel design is to give the 1.5-liter City a stronger and more daring stance while the aim for the 1.3-liter variant is to exude a refined attitude with its 14-inch 9-spoke wheel design. The silver ring accent of the taillights and body-colored mud guards further add to the City's classy styling.

Enhancements inside the City: The 1.5-liter variant comes with an iPod ready audio system. The rear cabin is also enhanced with rear-seat armrest and rear-seat under box.

The new City now comes with the immobilizer. This feature prevents unauthorized use of the vehicle by enabling only the original keys to switch on the engine.

5 variants

The five Vios models are 1.5G leather automatic transmission, 1.5G automatic and manual transmission, the 1.3E manual transmission and the 1.3J manual transmission. It comes in seven shades—super white, medium silver metallic, red mica metallic, beige metallic, grayish blue metallic, black and silver metallic.

The new Vios will be assembled in the Philippines. It's new model celebrity endorser? Well, that's still under wraps. But you can count Britney out of this.

Tale of the tape

Manufacturers' official specs

	New Vios	Honda City	Previous Vios
Dimensions overall (in mm)			
length	4300	4400	4285
width	1,700	1690	1695
height	1460	1485	1450
wheelbase	2550	2450	2500
Tread/FR	1470	1440 (1.5)/1455 (1.3)	1455
Tread/RR	1460	1440 (1.5)/1455 (1.3)	1430
Minimum turning radius	4.9	4.9	4.9
Seat height adjuster	rachet-type vertical	knob-type vertical	knob-type vertical
Engines	VVT-I, 4 cylinder In-line DOHC 16V EFI for 1.3 and 1.5 1.3 liter: max power 86.73ps /6000 rpm; max torque 12.44 kg-m/4200 rpm; max torque 1.5-liter: max power 109.18ps/6,000rpm; max torque 14.479kg-m/4,200rpm	1.5 VTEC engine / 1.3-liter SOHC I-DSI engine 1.3 SOHC I-dsi: max power 82 ps/5700 rpm; max torque 11.8 kg-m@2800 rpm 1.5 VTEC 110 ps/5800 rpm; max torque 14.5kg-m/4800 rpm	

THE NEW seat structure—designed to reduce body strain—aims to lessen fatigue during long drives.

Nissan Motors Phils. reveals fully loaded promo winners

JUNE 26 MARKED THE CULMINATION of the highly-successful Nissan Fully Loaded promo. Nissan Motors Philippines Inc. raffled off a total of 110 Sony PlayStation Portable, 10 Acer notebook computers and 10 Nissan Sentra 1.3 GX to lucky customers who have purchased their Nissan from Feb. 15 to May 31.

Present during the raffle draw were NMPI executives and officers from the Nissan dealerships in Metro Manila. Esteemed DTI representatives were also present to supervise the grand draw and media friends from the country's top motoring shows covered this momentous event.

"We are extremely happy with the success of the Nissan Fully Loaded promo, it speaks well of the continuous loyalty to the Nissan brand here in the country," says NMPI president Allen Chen. "This promo was NMPI's way of expressing gratitude to our valued Nissan customers," Chen adds.

Winners

The 10 lucky winners of Nissan Sentra 1.3 GX were lawyer Cornelio Azarcon, Ma. Socorro I. Clavano and Victor Amores Jr. from Mantrade Development Corp., Babiera Ben-Guiron from Nissan Gallery Quezon Avenue, Tommy Mendez from Nissan Shaw Center Mandaluyong, Jose Ma Hocson and Limdimas Guillermo of Nissan Westgate Alabang, Eric Sze, Ma. Dolor Malagueno and Ma. Victoria Santos of Nissan North Edsa.

The winners of the 10 Acer notebook computers were Ronito Rabino of Mantrade Development Corp., Virginia Robediso of Nissan Cebu Distributors Inc., Ma. Teresa Ganzon of Nissan Iloilo, Rico Roque and Argent Dulce of Nissan Manila Inc., Laarnie Mariano and William C. Abrahan of Nissan Southwoods, Carolina Nipales of Nisssan Westgate Alabang, Emmanuel Cortez of Nissan United Nations Avenue and Gerry M. Buhain of Nissan North Edsa.

The winners of the 110 Sony PlayStation are included in the complete list of winners. Please log on to www.nissan.com.ph for the complete list. All winners will be notified by registered mail.

The Nissan Fully Loaded promo is just one of the many surprises NMPI has lined up for this year. As the excitement for the upcoming Campi Motorshow this August intensifies, the Philippine market will be given a chance to peek into what NMPI has in store for tomorrow...

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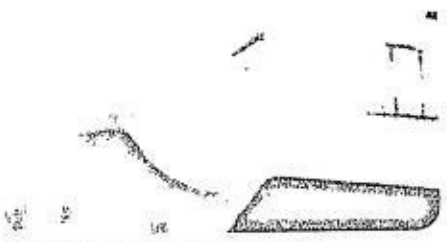
City Secrets *part one*

This week, we asked people to spill the beans about their undiscovered hangouts, shopping haunts, favorite food stops and interesting characters. We have a 24-hour bar, a closet you'd want to raid, a Thai resto that people have fallen in love with, cupcake goodness and Tado's special store.

And we're only getting started. E-mail your own secret place in the city to Ls_2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Because some secrets are too good not to be shared



A CUPCAKE bouquet of flowers

Royal treats

Yumi Castrillo's Yummy Piece of Cake cupcakes are distinguished by their unusual flavors

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

EVER SINCE THE CUPCAKE trend caught on in the Philippines last year, dozens of shops have been hopping on the baking bandwagon.

Without a doubt, Sonja's Cupcakes in Serendra is still the cupcake place to beat in terms of presentation and popularity, but there are some bakers who constantly challenge Sonja for her sweet throne.

One of them is Yumi Castrillo, the force behind Yummy Piece of Cake. A lawyer by day and a baker by night, Castrillo initially got into the cupcake business when she started baking to take a break from the pressures of studying law. During especially hectic days, she would take refuge in the kitchen, turning out cakes, brownies and cookies and sending them to her husband's officemates. Eventually, the orders started coming in, and she decided to focus on cupcakes.

"I started experimenting with cupcakes simply because they were easier, faster and so much cuter," said Castrillo. "Cupcakes are so versatile. They're perfect for casual gatherings or as a snack, or dressed up and piled up with frosting. The best thing about them is, you can eat them on the go!"

However, more than presentation, Yummy Piece of Cake cupcakes are distinguished by their unusual flavors. Castrillo experimented with different ingredients to come up with unusual combinations. While some of them are old favorites (a bestseller is the Chocolate Truffle—chocolate cake topped with chocolate buttercream), it is Castrillo's new combinations that have clients coming back for more.

The Princess Di, a blue cheese and fresh

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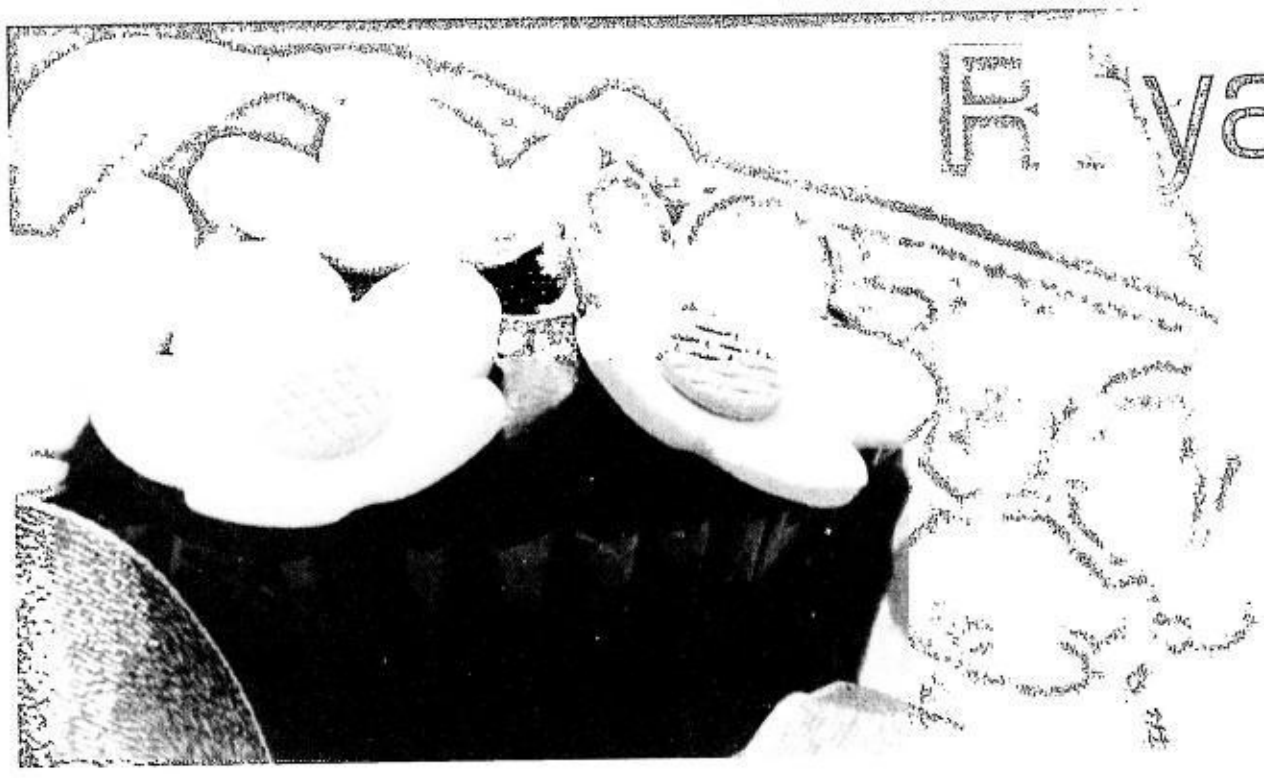
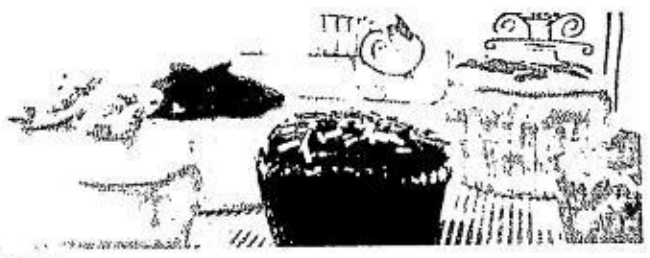
Royal treats





YOU can customize the decor of the cakes.

YUMI'S Chocolate Truffle cupcake is a bestseller.

From page C1

pear cupcake smeared with a dollop of tangy lemon buttercream, is a favorite with regulars.

Castrillo evidently likes her royalty, as another frequent order is the Marie Antoinette, a luxurious strawberry and champagne cupcake crowned with dark chocolate buttercream—fit for a picnic at Versailles.

Other specialty cupcakes include the Swiss Miss (blueberry cupcakes capped with white chocolate icing in honor of the Swiss Alps); the Mama Mia (fresh apple cake dotted with parmesan cheese and veiled with lemon buttercream); and the Scarlett O'Hara (a feisty chocolate red velvet cake iced with white chocolate buttercream).

In the mood for something more classic? Try out Orange You Glad, a bite of orange cake and dark chocolate Valencia cream; Black Russian, vanilla cake and Bailey's icing; Curious George, banana cake with dark chocolate; and The Elvis, banana cake with peanut butter frosting and chocolate syrup.

For children's parties, Castrillo recommends The Barbie, a pale vanilla cake decked out in pink strawberry buttercream.

"I'm not afraid to come up with unusual flavors," Castrillo stated. "I get inspired by trips to restaurants, poring through cookbooks, and plain trial and error. Many people are intrigued by the new flavors and respond wonderfully to them."

Another reason her clients keep coming back for more is that her cupcakes aren't priced at skyrocketing rates. The special cupcakes, such as the Princess Di and Marie Antoinette, are P35 each, while the regular ones range from P20-25 each, making her a popular choice for parties and wedding receptions.

While her cupcakes are only by order for the meantime, Castrillo said she has no problem with doing the work herself.

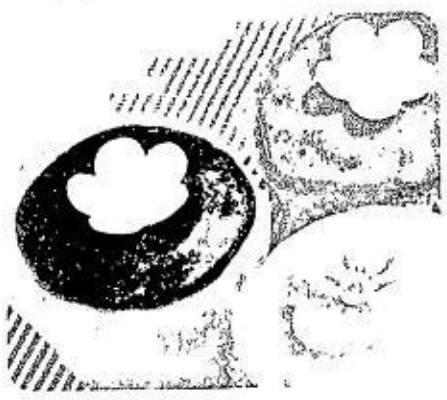
"As a home baker, I really just want to enjoy baking and coming up with new flavors. I intend to stay home-based in order to ensure the quality and the personal touch I give to each batch. I prefer to focus on catering to special parties and weddings, since I can customize the cupcakes into different themes. And of course, I intend to keep the prices reasonable."

She added: "Since I love making cupcakes, it isn't difficult to set aside time to take orders and bake. In fact, I look forward to it at the end of the day, after work."

Call 0917-8054063 or e-mail inquiries@yummypieceofcake.com

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

TRY OUT unusual combinations such as blue cheese and pear, strawberries and champagne, and banana and peanut butter



MORE adult flavors, such as cappuccino, Bailey's and orange Valencia characterize the cupcakes.

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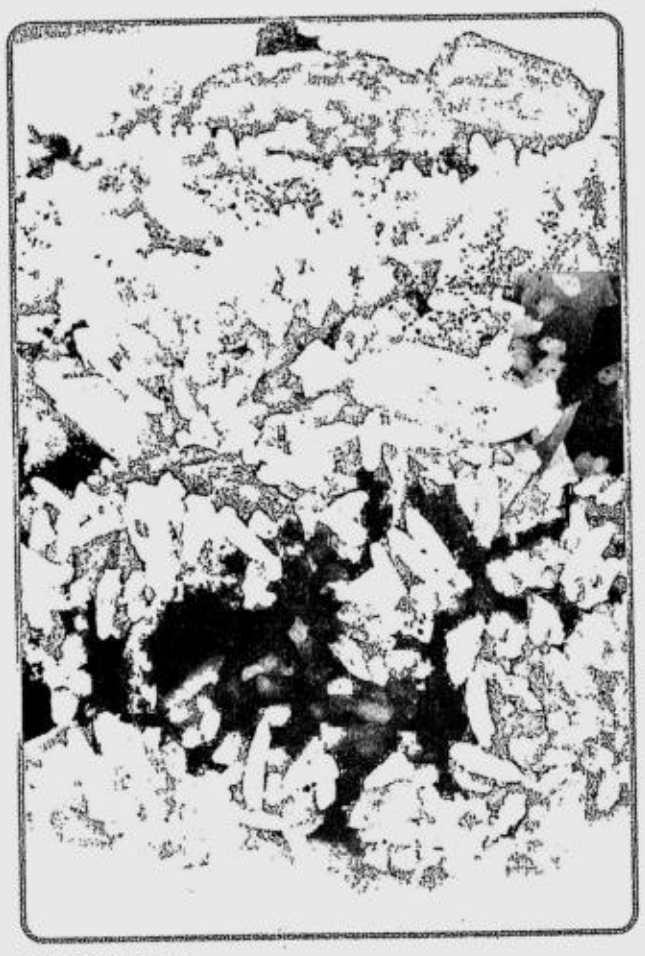

RICE, SOMS-style

Thai food, authentic and affordable

The thick and flavorful Tom Yum soup is a must-try

By Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

IF YOU'RE UP FOR SOME AFFORDable Thai cuisine, then we'll let you in on one of Manila's best kept secrets: SOMS Noodle House. It serves a variety of authentic Thai dishes with prices ranging from P60-P150.

A definite must-try is the Tom Yum soup which is thick and flavorful. Those allergic to shrimp can finally partake of this delicious Thai dish, since the soup comes in beef, pork or chicken variants. You can also opt for mild, medium or spicy flavors.

Other favorites are the rice toppings like Bagoong Rice and Beef Rice, Chicken Noodle soup, and the Curry dishes (which come in yellow, red or green).

To slake your thirst, try the SOMS signature milk tea. This sweet drink comes in small plastic bottles—also perfect for take-out orders.

SOMS has two branches now, one in Reposo and the other in Alger St. behind Rockwell. The latter branch is small and no-frills, and you'll find yourself literally eating on the street under some umbrellas.

It is best to come in small groups and during non-peak hours. Since this is a favorite destination of Makati yuppies and Ateneo graduate students, the place is always packed and you may have to wait a while for seats and for your orders to be served.

SOMS is located at 5921 A. Alger St. Poblacion, Makati. Near Grilla, Kalayaan Avenue. A much bigger branch can be found near St. Andrews Church, 1766 N. Garcia St. Corner Milagros St. Brgy. Valenzuela, Makati City.

TOM Yum soup

MILK tea

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MASTER Burger

SANGO Salad

Not your ordinary burger

By Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

TUCKED INSIDE CREEKside Mall in Makati is Manila's best Japanese Burger. One bite into this yummy treat and you'll understand why this is no ordinary bread-and-beef combination.

Oozing with the resto's special meat Sauce, Sango's signature Master Cheeseburger (P98) has all the trappings of comfort food fare. It's hot, flavorful and savory. You'll have a mess eating it, and yet you'll finish it off with a happy smile and a happy belly.

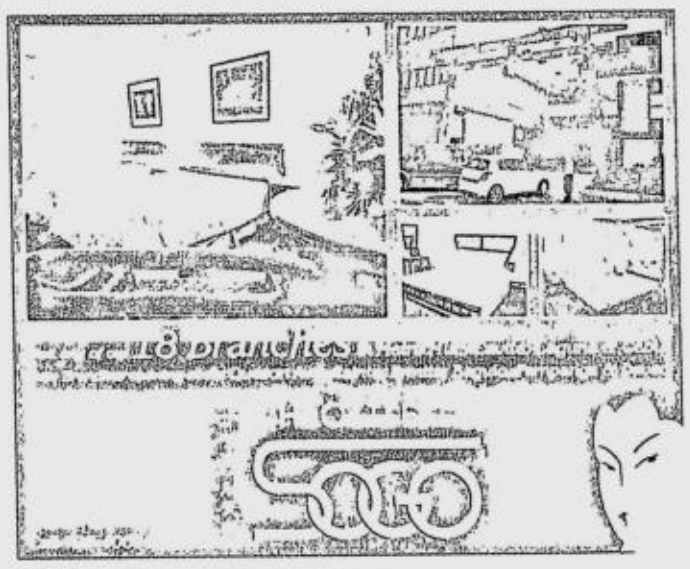
Other must-tries are the *goboh* salad, Tonkatsu Burger, rice burgers and Sango's yummy shakes.

Orders come with cute little Origami creatures handmade by the friendly Sango staff.

If you can't head to the resto any time soon, don't fret because it actually delivers. Those who work in Makati offices can order Sango for OT food or after-drinks grub.

Sango is located at Creekside Mall, Amorsolo St. corner Legaspi Village, Makati. Beside Makati Cinema Square. Call 830-0391.

E-mail the author at zemirah@gmail.com



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More secrets spilled

"My secret hangout is Pivo in Ortigas Home Depot. It has yummy brewed beer in caramel and banana flavors."
—Zerl Chan, group product manager for Lancome

"My secret hangout is Macky's in Marikina—the best tokwa't baboy and goto in town!"
—Tina Silva-Navarro, designer/entrepreneur, Ilaya

"This restaurant at the top of DLSU-Benilde's Angelo King building. The view is spectacular."**—Rosa Villanueva, lawyer**

"After a very stressful week, I always make sure I get a good body massage to relax and maintain good blood circulation. I go to "Massage King" in SM Sta. Mesa. You can get the luxury of a good body massage and foot spa without having to pay too much. The members of the staff are nice and kind."
—EJ Mallorca, Shu Uemura

"May nagsabi na ba ng Som's? It serves authentic Thai food that's very affordable. I swear, you haven't tasted anything like this before. It has two branches in Makati—Rockwell and Reposo. Its specialties include red chicken curry, green tofu curry, tom yum soup, pad thai, bagoong rice. Heck... try everything!"
—Jugs Jugueta

"My best-kept secret: Nails At Home's mani and pedi and foot spa services. There's nothing like being pampered in the comfort of your own bedroom. The number is 7264877."
—Amina Aranaz-Alunan

"LimiTADO is Marikina's witty retort to Rockwell's Archaeology: Independent Lifestyles space. Trip happy place for the T-shirt, flip flops set. It's in N. Roxas St., Kalumpang, Marikina, open till 11 p.m. Comedian Tado Jimenez runs it with his girlfriend. Tado designs the shirts, they alter your ukay loot that don't fit, etc. Bags and quirky accessories are available, too."**—Gang Badoy, Rock Ed**

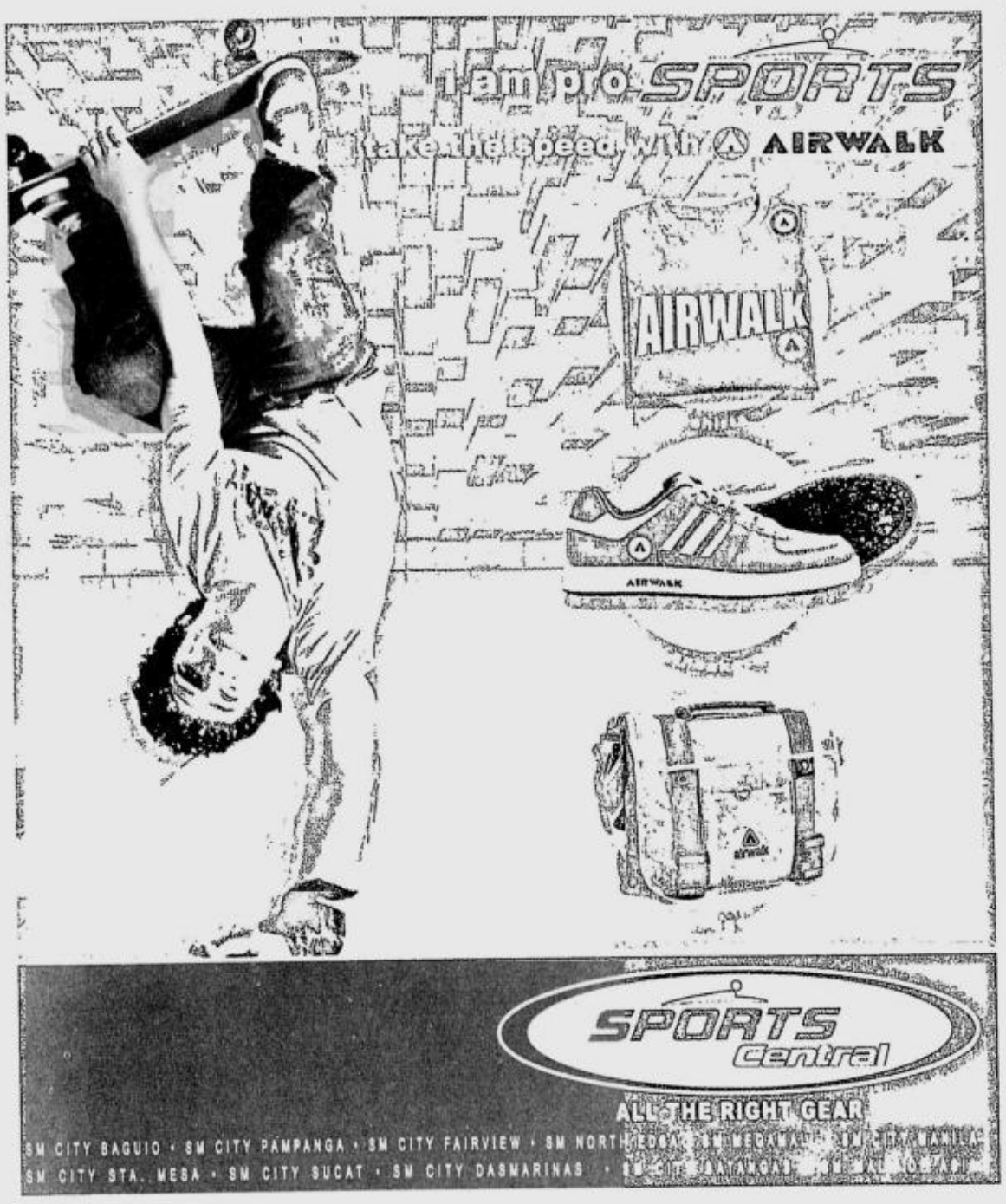
"My best-kept secret is Dial A Massage. One hour massage for just P275. An attendant comes wearing a uniform. I do that every Sunday. The number is 7239552. Also, the Little Store on the Hill in San Juan and Gilmore. For P250 you have rice, fresh Chinese lumpia, crab rice and omelette."
—Annie Ringor

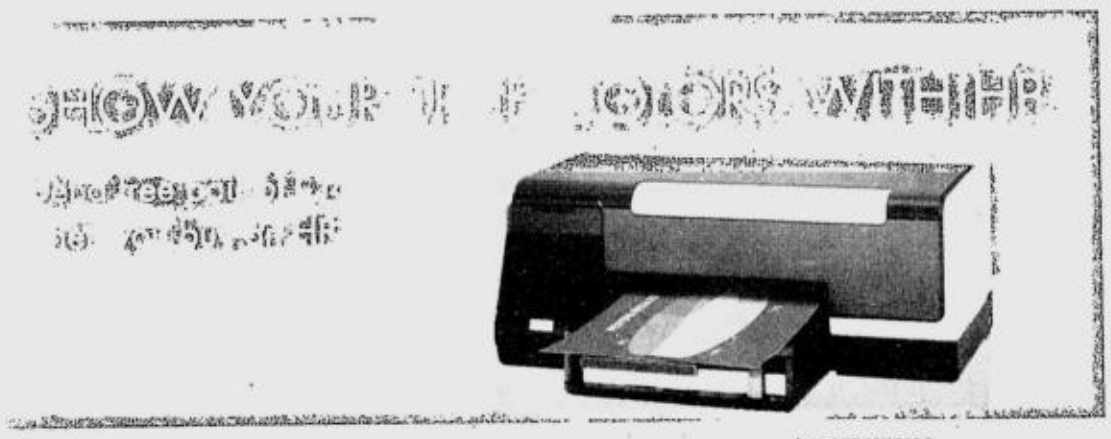
"For gourmet comfort food and great date ambiance, Apartment 1B in Salcedo Village." **—Xeng Zulueta, Chief Makeup Artist, Shu Uemura**

"Optimal Nail Salon in Legaspi St. It may look rinky-dink but it's tops in price and friendly service."
—Zane Ronquillo

"There's this cozy restaurant in president's avenue called Amalia's that serves the best chicken croquettas—crunchy on the outside, soft inside. One bite will make your tastebuds rejoice! Also, a tiny resto in San Juan called Little Store on the Hill has super yummy fresh lumpia the size of a really fat baby's thigh. For dessert, the chocolate cake of Costa Brava is to die for, same with Polly's chocolate cake at the Shell station in Magallanes. A friend of mine, Ryan Saavedra, says his best sweetest secret are the crinkles from Julie's Bakeshop in Evangelista, Makati. It's chewy and soft and extremely cheap!"
—Alexei Villaraza

"I don't go to coffee shops anymore for wifi with my laptop. Anytime I want, I can get online with my MacBookPro, virtually anywhere for just P10. Smart has this rate of P10/30 minutes unlimited kb for GPRS and 3G. I just hook up my laptop and 3G phone via Bluetooth and voila, I'm online! It's not as well publicized as their IDD plans or unlimited texting promos. But this is a steal! No more coughing up of 100 for one measly hour at a coffee shop. This is the new wifi ng kuripot."
—TJ Manotoc





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PROMOTION MECHANICS:

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2. Two ways to claim:
   Option1: Fax or email the following documents to Yeaps Corporation and attention the documents to Ms. RC Concepcion.
   a. Sales invoice/Official receipt
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   d. Valid ID
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Sandwiched between a P12 burger joint and a P40 barber shop, LimiTado offers fashion finds, quirky picks and a seven-song CD that won't put a dent in your pocket

The Gospel of Tado's T-shirts

By Pam Pastor

WHEN ASKED TO SPILL her city secret, RockEd's Gang Badoy told us about LimiTado. "LimiTado is Marikina's witty retort to Rockwell's Archaeology: Independent Lifestyles space. It's a happy place for the T-shirt, flip-flops set.

Comedian Tado Jimenez runs it with his wife. Tado designs the shirts. They alter your *ukay* loot that don't fit, etc. Bags and quirky accessories are available too," she SMSd.

Naturally, like Gang, we felt like spreading the gospel of Tado's shirts too.

It's not a commonly known fact but Tado has been printing shirts for some time now. "*Madalas akong mag*-consign *sa ibang* shops, *sa mga kaibigan ko. Pero naisip ko, maganda rin na magkaroon ako ng sariling tindahan.*"

And the best part? He only prints a limited number of shirts for every design—so each one is actually a collectible.

His Ninoy Aquino spoof shirt is one of the more popular designs. *"Hindi nawawala yun kasi laging hinahanap ng tao. 'Di ba sabi ni* Ninoy *"Hindi Ka Nag-Iisa"? Yung akin, "Nag-iisa*

THE GOSPEL/ D3

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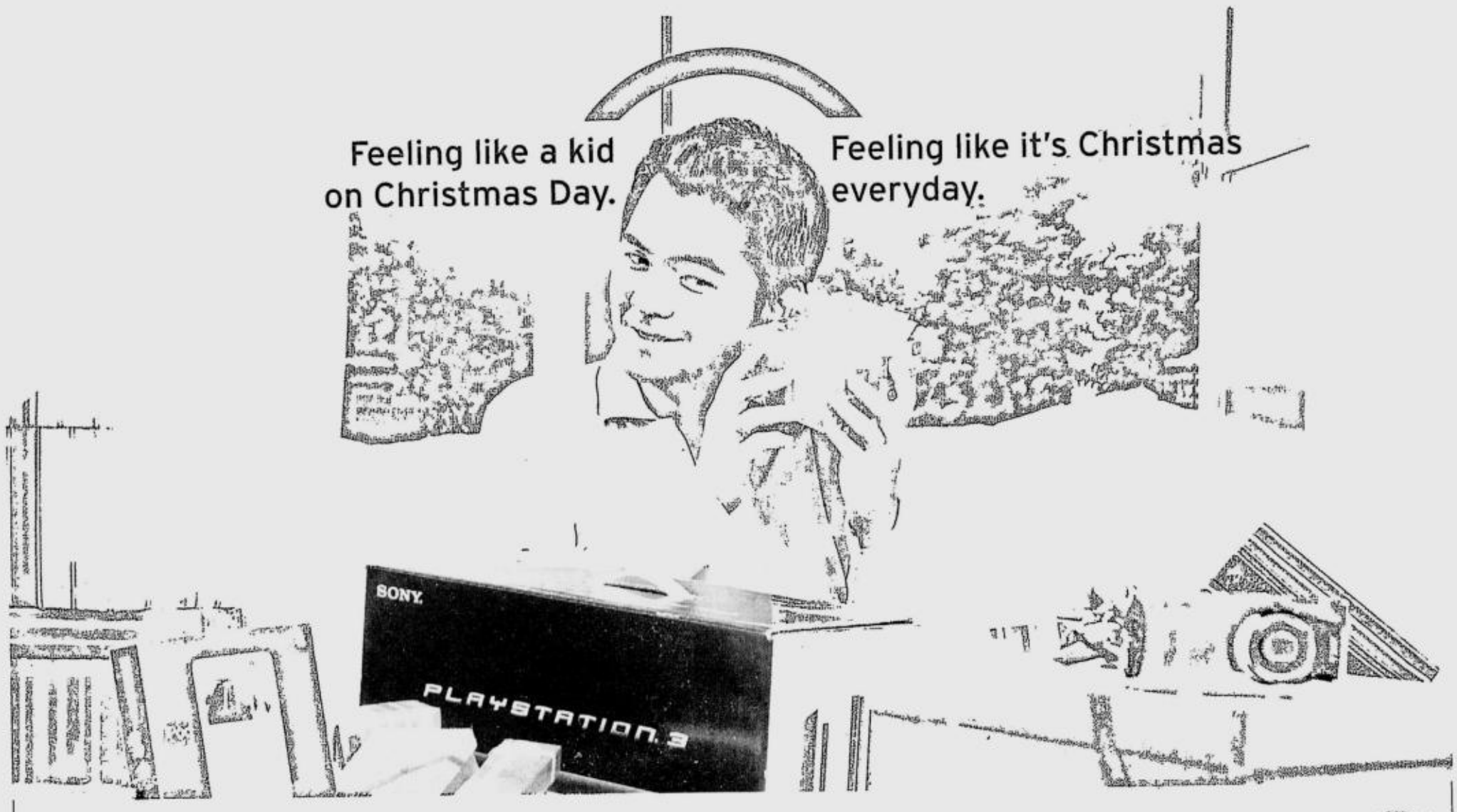

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PUGAD BABOY

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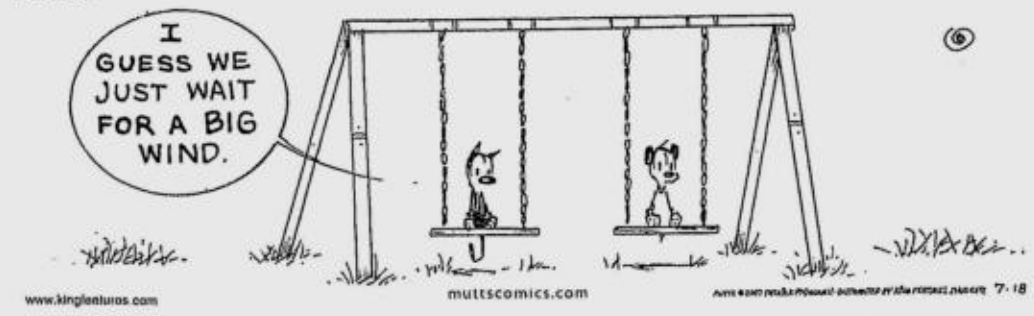


LOVEKNOTS

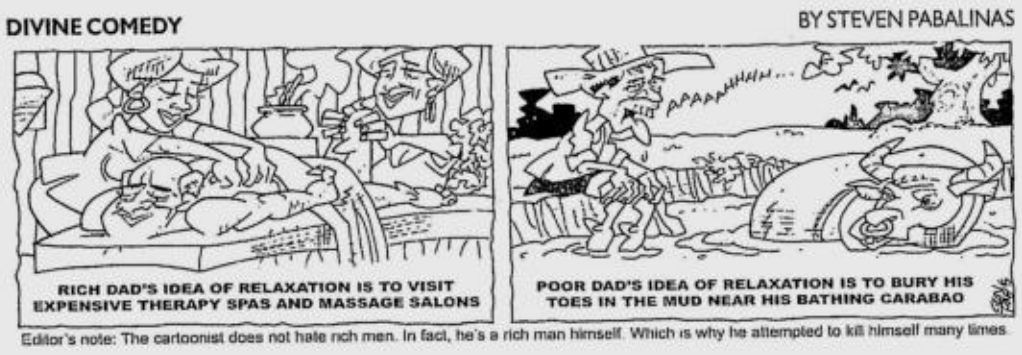
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



Editor's note: The cartoonist does not hate rich men. In fact, he's a rich man himself. Which is why he attempted to kill himself many times.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

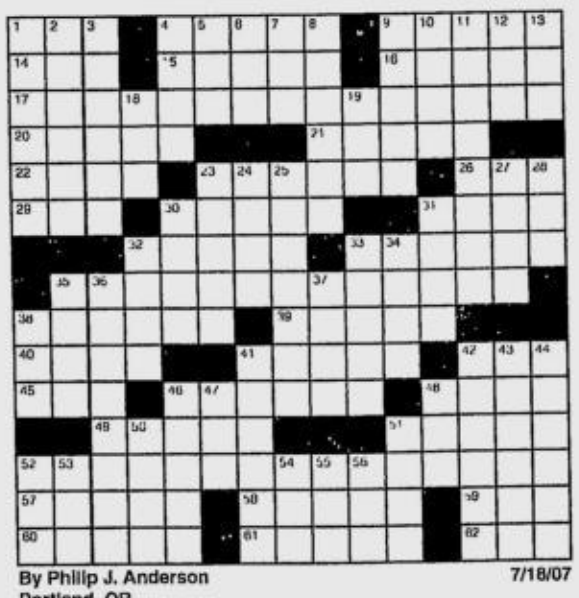
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Brit's raincoat
4 Short summary
9 Runs easily
14 Stevedores' org.
15 Studio alert
16 Poetic lament
17 EMT gatherings?
20 Mountain ridge
21 Barbary ape
22 Billy or nanny
23 Regained consciousness
26 Raggedy doll
29 D.C. clock setting
30 Unit of capacitance
31 Week-ending shout
32 Sprayed, defensively
33 Sign up
35 Furniture-makers gatherings?
38 "In Cold Blood" author
39 One of the Axis Powers
40 Envelope abbr.
41 Papal vestment
42 Early TV co.
45 Luau dish
46 Search for food
48 Lake formed by Hoover Dam
49 Central Florida city
51 Tidal bore
52 Acquitted ones gatherings?
57 "The Cloister and the Hearth" author
58 Hockey scores
59 Court divider
60 Paid parker
61 Els with tees
62 Dijon donkey

DOWN
1 Oasis, maybe
2 Oldsmobile models
3 Admonition
4 Wander
5 Spanish queen
6 Pres. Coolidge
7 Set sights
8 Future MD's course
9 Release
10 Mixed bag
11 Five-sided figure
12 Batter ingredient
13 Part of CBS
18 Addams Family cousin
19 Break bread
23 Hiding place
24 God of war
25 Portuguese wine
27 Guitarist Lofgren
28 Cowboy's org.
30 Bit of data
31 Helen of __
32 Charged lepton
33 On-line transaction
34 Cairo's river
35 "Censor" of Rome
36 Not mandatory
37 Bachelor party
38 Beret or biretta
41 Citrus fruit
42 Saskatchewan capital
43 Swerve wildly
44 "__ Fideles"
46 Side
47 Corrida call
48 Tatami, e.g.
50 Secret lingo
51 Irish Gaelic
52 Journalist Kupcinet
53 Teacher' org.
54 Rocky peak
55 Kitchen utensil
56 Clay, today



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
7/18/07

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

P	A	D	R	E		H	E	A	P		E	D	D	Y
O	N	E	I	L		A	C	N	E		N	C	A	A
S	T	E	P	F	A	T	H	E	R		L	I	M	P
S	O	M	E		G	R	O	W		J	I	V	E	S
E	N	S	N	A	R	E			R	A	G			
				G	O	D	D	A	U	G	H	T	E	R
S	A	B	L	E			O	V	E	R	T	U	R	E
E	R	I	E		W	I	N	E	S		E	D	I	E
T	I	R	A	M	I	S	U			O	N	E	N	D
H	A	L	F	B	R	O	T	H	E	R				
			S	A	Y			A	D	D	R	E	S	S
S	E	A	T	S		T	E	R	I		E	M	I	T
U	S	D	A		G	R	E	A	T	U	N	C	L	E
N	A	I	L		A	I	L	S		P	E	E	V	E
G	U	N	K		L	O	S	S		S	W	E	A	R

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7/18/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're unusually courageous. You're very committed to whatever cause you embrace. You choose to work with like-minded individuals to promote your beliefs. Adventure appeals to you; you want to try the unexplored. You're a hard worker. You devote more time to yourself this year in order to study or learn something important.
Birthdate of: Nelson Mandela, honored statesman/activist; Kristen Bell, actress; Vin Diesel, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Interruptions at work are likely today. Expect computer crashes, fire drills, power outages or staff shortages. Because your daily routine will go sideways, you need to keep a positive attitude about everything.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Lovers' spats can erupt easily today. Things are definitely unpredictable. Parents must be extra watchful over children. Stay alert throughout the day.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be patient with family members today. Arguments can flare up easily because people are impatient. Guard against minor accidents and small breakages.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is an accident-prone day; therefore, slow down and take your time in everything you do. Impatience and haste definitely can help to make things go wrong.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Financial matters can get mixed up today. If shopping, keep your receipts. Guard against lost money or possessions. (However, you also might find money if you are watchful.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with partners and close friends today. Tempers can flare up easily. However, a little bit of tolerance and sympathetic understanding can help you avoid unpleasant scenes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Interruptions at work will take place today. It's not a big deal if you remain flexible and don't insist on things running according to schedule. Keep it light!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Friends likely will surprise you today. Or possibly, you might meet a real character or someone who does something bizarre. (At least it's not a boring day!)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Parents, bosses, teachers or VIPs might surprise you today. In turn, you might feel rebellious. You will resist being told what to do. You don't want to be bossed around. (Just be patient.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Unexpected news from afar might catch you off-guard. Travel plans might be delayed. People are touchy about politics, religion and other matters. Oops—definitely cool your jets!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): If you're responsible for other people's property today, carefully guard it against theft, loss or breakage. Unpredictable events can affect your relationship to what others own

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with partners and loved ones today. Someone will likely do something that throws you for a loop. Try just to go with the flow. There's no point in making things worse—not today.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		4	5	8	3	6		
	5						2	
7		8	4		2	9		5
6			1		5			7
3								9
	1		6		9		5	
	3			9			4	
		1				3		
			3	6	7			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/18

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

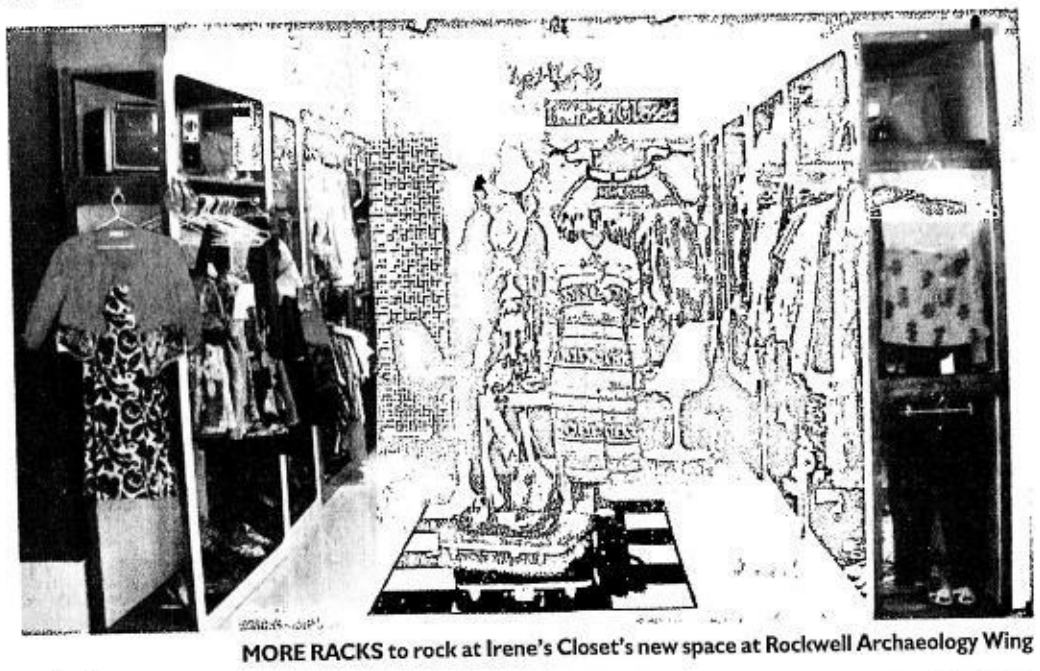
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

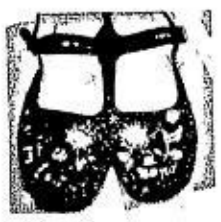
9	2	7	3	5	1	8	4	6
4	5	3	6	8	9	2	7	1
1	6	8	2	7	4	5	9	3
8	1	4	9	6	7	3	2	5
5	7	9	1	2	3	4	6	8
2	3	6	5	4	8	9	1	7
3	8	1	7	9	2	6	5	4
7	9	5	4	3	6	1	8	2
6	4	2	8	1	5	7	3	9

Difficulty Level ★★

SOME PIECES from Irene Pineda's Coochi Lala line

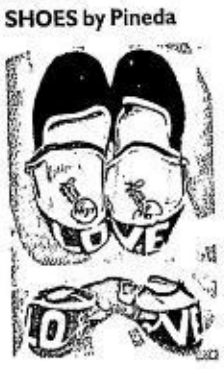


MORE RACKS to rock at Irene's Closet's new space at Rockwell Archaeology Wing

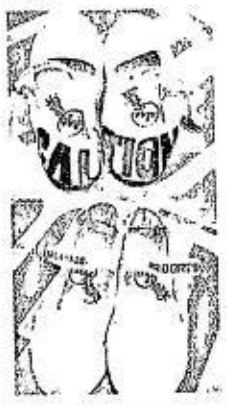


SHOES by Pineda

Get ready to raid this Closet



LOVE-inspired Kung Fu shoes by Sharon Atillo of I Love You Store



SHOES inspired by sunny days, by Atillo

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Alanah Torralba

Reworked fashion pieces, kung-fu shoes, handmade accessories—raiding Irene's Closet is like raiding your best friend's

IRENE'S CLOSET IS ONE secret every fashion-loving Pinay knows about.

For several years now, girls have been raiding her closet, from the one she first put up in her house in Palm Village and the little store she opened in the same village to her first space in Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

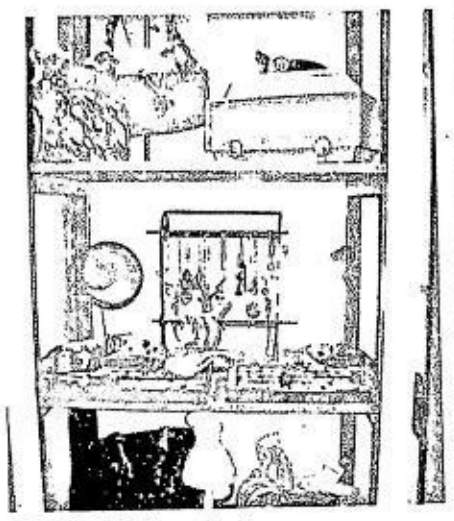
Her choice vintage finds have become great additions to the wardrobes of many Filipinas, and the whimsical accessories she designs and makes with her own hands have been featured prominently in the pages of the country's glossies.

Irene's creative juices just keep flowing. Showing no signs of stopping, she continues to explore her passion for fashion and all things pretty in her new space at Rockwell's Archaeology wing, which was launched just last month.

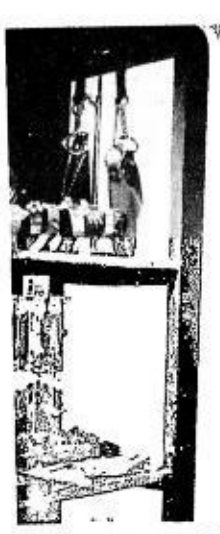
"I am happy and totally ecstatic to be part of a haven of young independent Filipino designers and retailers personally handpicked by Rockwell Power Plant," says Irene Pineda, proprietor.

And she has earned her spot there with her creations—from summer cuffs and crocheted necklaces that many have copied, to her one-of-a-kind neck- and head-pieces.

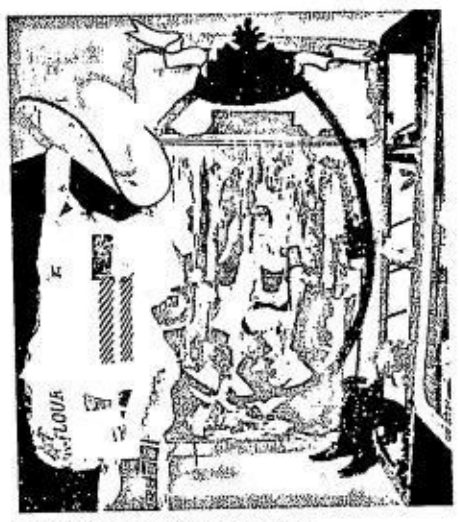
Irene recently introduced Coochi Lala, her new line of clothes.



ACCESSORIES overload



TREASURE trove of fashion finds



THE I LOVE YOU store corner

"The sole purpose of Coochi Lala is to reinvent, recreate and reconstruct pre-loved items. Each piece is uniquely created, designed and handcrafted," she explains.

The clothes do look and feel more like works of art, and the brand still fits what Irene's Closet originally set out to do—to offer wardrobe additions to people who love "things that are not mass-produced or mass-marketed."

Irene believes that's where the attraction is.

Irene also continues to carry her accessories line—her charm bracelets are adorable. She also collaborated with I Love You Store and produced graffiti kung-fu shoes inspired by the need for self-expression. She feels that her partnership with I Love You Store is a natural one, because of their shared love for vintage fashion and art.

The red kung-fu shoes Irene designed is embellished with elements that represent her craft, her light, travel and feeling lost in a fast-moving world.

Raiding Irene's Closet is like raiding your best friend's wardrobe—if your best friend has a flair for art and an eye for one-of-a-kind goodies.

Trust us, this is not just a closet. It's a treasure trove.

Visit Irene's Closet at R2 level, Archaeology Rockwell Power Plant Mall, Makati. Operating hours are 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Mondays-Thursdays and Sundays; 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays. Call 8961058 or e-mail shop@irenescloset.com.

THE DRAWING BOARD. Tado still has a lot of plans for his store.

BAGS galore

T-SHIRT ENVY. You won't find shirts like these in your favorite mall.

The gospel of Tado's T-shirts

QUIRKY finds

From page D1

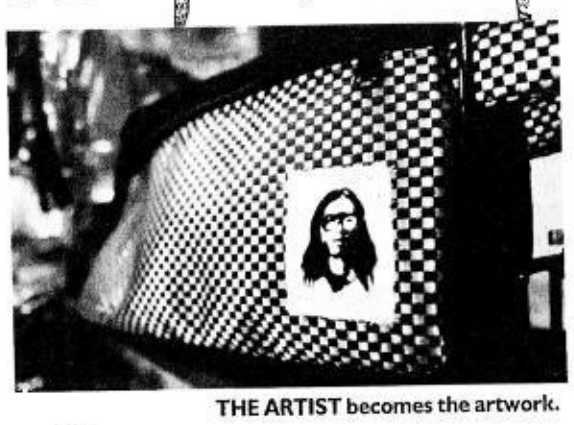
Lang Ako."

He also has dreams of printing his poetry on shirts and taking pictures of people who he would spot wearing his words.

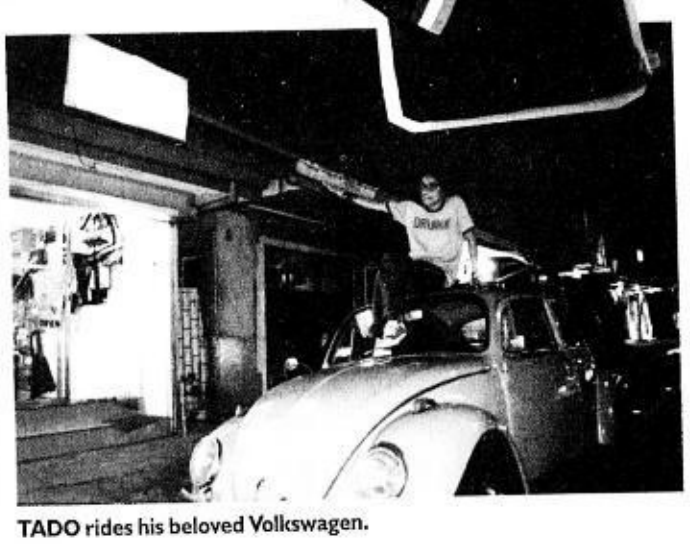
Next month, he says they'll offer bigger sizes. *"Kawawa naman yung friends ko na malalaki, ang nangyayari nagbibigay na lang sila ng* T-shirt *nila at doon ako nagpi-*print; P30 *na lang ang singil ko sa kanila.* Next month *may* quadruple XL *na ako."*

Tado's goods wouldn't put a dent in your pocket—he sells his shirts for just P150-P250. And he feels that it's just right, given his location.

"Nagtayo ako ng tindahan sa tabi ng dose pesos na hamburger-an at barberya na P40 *lang ang gupit."*



THE ARTIST becomes the artwork.



TADO rides his beloved Volkswagen.

THE MANY offerings of LimiTado

Family affair

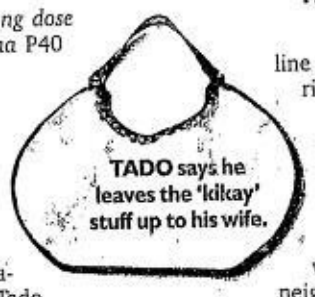
LimiTado does not just offer Tado's shirts—it's home to a lot of other quirky finds. Bags, accessories—and even toy collectibles that Tado is passionate about. *"Mahilig ako sa* die-cast na Volkswagen. *Madalas din ako bumili nun,"* Tado said.

Tado also sells CDs of his band Live Tilapia at the store. The CD, which includes seven songs, goes for just P50.

The store is a family affair for Tado. His wife Lei takes care of what he calls the *kikay* side of things. They sell clothes that Tado's mom sews.

And they offer fashion finds from Korea as well.

Tado has exciting things in store for LimiTado fans. He intends to create a line of shirts he refers to as his arts series.



TADO says he leaves the 'kikay' stuff up to his wife.

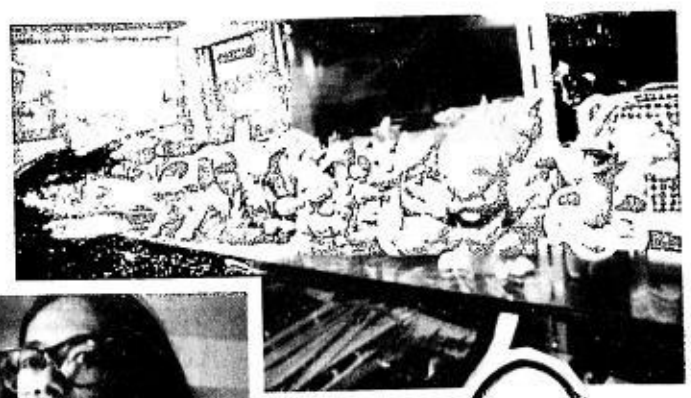
The shirts would feature the paintings of his artist friends. He would also have an in-house tattoo artist soon for people who want a more permanent statement.

While a lot of the people who visit his shop live just around his neighborhood, there are those who travel far to get their dose of Tado's offerings. *"May mga dumadayo pa galing* Pasay," Tado said.

And for affordable limited-edition shirts, collectibles and unpretentious fashion finds—why not?

Visit LimiTado at 57 N. Roxas St., Barangay Kalumpang, Marikina daily from 3 p.m.-1 a.m.

A TOUCH of pink



LIMITADO is home to toys, fashion and more.

They've got it in the (brown paper) bag

It's always night at this 24-hour bar

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Jill Lejano

SISIG

CHICKEN Guts

BEEF Salpicao

CHICKEN Skin

TOKWA'T Baboy

IT WAS NOON ON A Saturday when we walked into Brown Paper Bag, but all of a sudden, it felt like midnight. The place had dark, rock music playing, and groups of friends were drinking beer and laughing loudly.

But Brown Paper Bag was not really meant to become a 24-hour bar. Run by young couple Boowy and Joyce Buan, the resto was named such because it was supposed to be a takeout place—a concept Boowy's mom Cholly came up with.

But because they added beer to the menu—at unbelievably low prices (one bottle for less than P30, six for around P140 and a case for just around P700)—the place soon became the favorite hangout of young people.

In fact, it was the constant stream of customers who came in at random hours that inspired the owners to keep the bar open all day and all night when it moved to their new location late last year.

BAGGING it. Joyce and Boowy Buan

"We have people coming in at 5 or 6 a.m. to drink with their friends. They'd end up staying until noon," Boowy says.

Big servings

People don't just go to Brown Paper Bag for the drinks. Its menu boasts of a wide range of Pinoy and comfort food—recipes of Boowy's mom. The food, like the beer, is affordable. Most of the menu items go for under P100.

"The food is affordable but we make sure our servings are big. We eat out too and we know what it's like to be short-changed," Boowy says.

Bestsellers include bar food favorites—Sisig (P100), Beef Salpicao (P95), Calamares (P105), Crispy Pata (P300), Tokwa't Baboy (P80), Chicken Skin (P85) and Chicken Guts (P55).

The chicken skin is everyone's favorite, says Joyce. She recommends that first-timers try it.

The bar also serves rice meals (Beef and Gravy, Fried Chicken, Buttered Chicken, Baked Liempo, Breaded Pork Chop, Crispy Tilapia, etc.), pasta and noodles (Carbonara, Alfredo, Pinoy Spaghetti, Canton, Lomi, Bihon) and sandwiches and burgers.

It has lunch specials on weekdays for employees working in nearby offices. And Brown Paper Bag still gets to fulfill its original role as a takeout place—especially when it's extra-packed.

There's a good mix of people who spend time at Brown Paper Bag—call center agents, bank employees, Eastwood employees, Japanese animation artists, a whole mix—and a number of them have become good friends of the couple.

Hands on

Boowy and Joyce have regular promos to keep their customers happy. They serve free food with half and full cases of beer. And they are excited about serving Infinit' Drinks, which have recently been launched by Ginebra.

"They're flavored cocktails that come in bottles—Strawberry Margarita, Grape Sling, Green Tea, Citrus Grill, Tropical Pineapple and Blue Cola. We'll be selling them three plus one for P90," says Joyce.

Despite having day jobs (Boowy is a medicine graduate and works for a medical transcription company and Joyce is an interior designer), they are very hands on when it comes to their business.

"We do everything ourselves," Boowy says. It's hard, but he acknowledges that it's good to have total control over the bar.

The couple still has a lot of plans for Brown Paper Bag. "Eventually, we want to turn it into a gallery—there are artists who want to showcase their artwork on our walls. I also want to have band nights," says Boowy.

No doubt about it—no matter what they do with the place, people will keep coming back for more.

"Brown Paper Bag is for people who want something different," says Boowy.

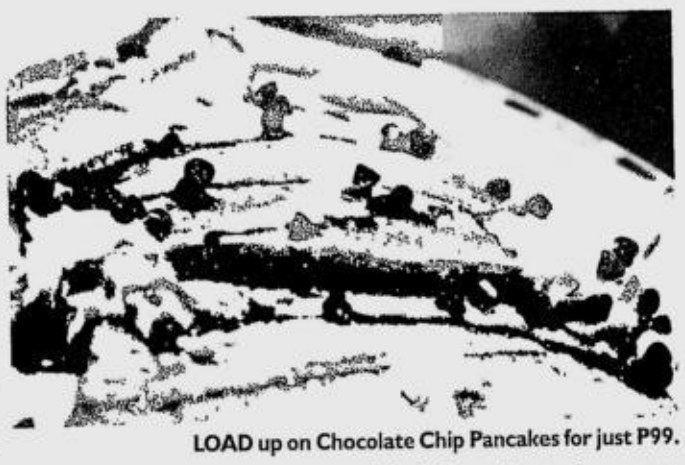
In this case, different means cheap beer, good chicken skin, graffiti on the walls and midnight at 12 noon.

Brown Paper Bag is located at G/F Intrepid Plaza, E. Rodriguez Ave., Quezon City. Call 6338414.

diners reinvented

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

MAYBE YOU'VE WATCHED "Grease" and "Rebel Without a Cause" a hundred times and wish Elvis ruled the airwaves again. Maybe you think Marilyn Monroe and drive-in movies with waitresses in roller skates are "the bee's knees." Or maybe you just like the concept of a 1950s American diner that serves up the best burgers and milk shakes in town.


LOAD up on Chocolate Chip Pancakes for just P99.

While James Dean and Elvis certainly won't come back from the dead, and drive-in theaters are just about extinct, old-fashioned American diners aren't about to die out just yet. Not if Butter Diner can help it, anyway. Decked out in framed posters of Marilyn Monroe, vintage cookie tins and bottles, and rotary dial telephones, (with peppy fifties music piped into the sound system), the Butter Diner is American kitsch at its best. And get this—all the waiters and waitresses wear either Afro or Elvis wigs as they go about in their fifties-looking uniforms.

"I wanted to evoke the nostalgic feeling of drive-in movies and soda fountains," said Melissa Sison, owner of Butter Diner. "The restaurant serves all-day breakfast, burgers, rice meals—food that comforts and fills you, the kind that you look for after a long day at work, or after watching an exciting game at the Araneta Coliseum."

Contrary to what many people think, the restaurant's dishes are not piled heavily with butter. "My best friend and I call each other 'butter,'" Sison explained. "We joked around about calling the restaurant that and we eventually did, but it doesn't mean that everything is served with butter."

However, Sison is quick to add that flavored butter is one of the specialties of the menu, with about 15 varieties listed on the menu. "We wanted to add a twist to everything," Sison said. "Because of the flavored butters, people had the option to choose new combinations; they mixed chocolate with strawberry, blueberry with mango, and so on."

The interiors are American kitsch circa 1950s. But the food is great

WE love the Strawberry Ice Cream Shake and Rootbeer Float.

Varieties

With over a dozen varieties of butter to try (including Smokin' Bacon, Barbecue Party, Blueberry Delight, Crazy Chocolate Chop, Salsa Cilantro, Cinnamon Raisin, Crispy Garlic, Ham and Cheese, Mango Tango, Orange Valencia, Yummy Peanut Butter, Classic Whipped Butter, Red Hot Chili Pepper, and Famous Strawberry Butter), it's no surprise that customers troop to the diner located at Shopwise Cubao just to sample all the flavors. Each table is equipped with a toaster, so that diners can heat the bread—and spread their butter of choice as they go—when they want to.

Don't expect fancy fusion cuisine here. There are no exotic salad leaves drizzled with berry-and-oil emulsions. Butter Diner is down-to-earth and homey; in fact, it is the type of place where, after a few visits, you can plunk down on your favorite seat, wave away the menu, and ask the waitress to bring you "the usual"—and actually have her bring the correct dish to the table.

Even the servings recall the 1950s. The diner brings back the days when food servings weren't the size of a 7-year-old's fist, when mothers leaned over their children, force-feeding them large servings of steak and potatoes. The Maryland Pot Roast (P199), for example, has four or five slices of roast beef served on a large pat of mashed potatoes—for that price, all you get in other restaurants is just the potatoes.

One of their specials, Marilyn's Pan-Fried Fish (P199) has two healthy-sized Alaskan sole fillets, deep-fried in batter and smothered with lemon pepper sauce. It is served with rice and vegetables. Not in the mood for rice? Try the Roadside Trip Better (P160), a large hamburger topped with fried egg and served with fries. Other main courses, such as the Dreamer's Beef Stroganoff (beef tips served with a cream and wine sauce) and Louisiana Pork Chops (marinated and served with java rice and coleslaw) are similarly priced at P199. The most expensive item on the menu is US Angus Boneless Spareribs, at P225 a serving.

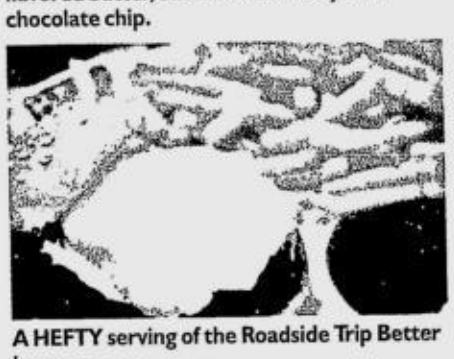
Large servings

The servings are quite large; a group of four can share three dishes and leave the restaurant full. Some dishes are meant to be shared, such as the 5-Layer Nachos (P195), while others are savored alone (the Diner Cheesecake and Marshmallow Sundae, P99 each, might be difficult to part with if you harbor a sweet tooth). You can also load up on their pancakes and waffles (P99 for varieties such as chocolate chip, blueberry, strawberry, peaches and cream, and banana nut).

The diner's milkshakes also bring back the era of smooth, creamy shakes, when low fat versions were unheard of. We particularly like the Strawberry Ice Cream shake (strawberry ice cream, puree, milk, and frozen strawberries) and Thick Chocolate Milk Shake (vanilla ice cream, milk, chocolate syrup, and peanut butter). The White Cow, a heady concoction of ice cream, milk, and vanilla flavoring, satisfies your craving for sweets without giving a toothache.

WAITERS and waitresses look like they're from '50s diners.

CHOOSE from over a dozen varieties of flavored butter, such as strawberry and chocolate chip.


A HEFTY serving of the Roadside Trip Better burger

Butter Diner is the kind of place that you wish that only you and your friends knew about—a place where you could hang out and eat all day long without breaking the bank, a place where you could share a pile of French fries loaded with ketchup and cheese, and a place where you could hum along to old music and slurp cold milkshakes while trading stories after a long week of school or work.

Butter Diner is located at the Shopwise Arcade, Gen. Aguinaldo Ave., Araneta Center, Cubao, and is open from 6 a.m.-12 midnight, Sunday-Thursday; and 6 a.m.-2 a.m., Friday and Saturday. Call 4210030.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

Feeling at home at homey eating place

By Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

EATING AT MOM AND TINA'S makes you feel like you're having dinner at an aunt's house. That's how comfortable it feels!

Mom and Tina's used to be a few tables and chairs affair on the first floor of the FRDC Building along Libis. But now, the family secret is out, and the new cafe recently opened just a few steps away, with more seats.

Mom and Tina's American country decor adds to the pleasant and inspired feeling of the restaurant. The couches and seats are cozy and relaxed, and will make you feel all the more at home.

Start your meal with the cafe's hearty soups (Broccoli, Mushroom). These can be split into two if you'd like to share with your companion, and just perfect to start your meal.

Some favorite Mom and Tina's dishes are the Mango Kani Salad, Roast Beef, Salisbury Steak, Lengua, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwhich, and Rib-eye Steak. Prices range from P100 to P300.

Some favorite Mom and Tina's dishes are the Mango Kani Salad, Roast Beef, and Salisbury Steak

As for dessert, they serve a variety of treats from cakes to cookies, trifles and pies. Some favorites are the Braso de Mercedes, Carrot Cake, Chocolate Fudge, Blueberry Cheesecake, Toblerone Trifle and Turtle Pies. The place serves mini and sugarless dessert versions as well.

The cupcakes can give the "more popular" shops a run for their money. You can choose from carrot, butter rum, vanilla, and chocolate versions. And at just P14-P25, you won't hesitate to go for seconds.

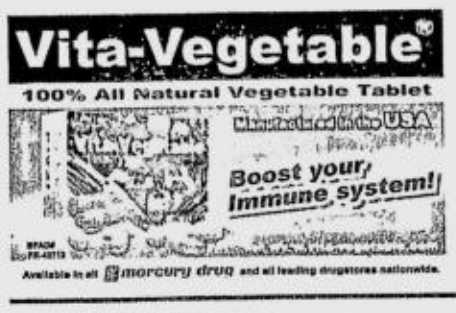
If you'd like to extend your Mom and Tina's experience, they keep their fridges stocked with their goodies for customers to take home!

Mom and Tina's is located at 106 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Brgy. Ugong, Pasig. Across from SM Hypermart Libis. Call 914-0833.

E-mail the author at zemirah@gmail.com

ROAST Beef

MOM and Tina's cupcakes



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More than just high notes

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT WAS A GRAND ATTEMPT TO show she can do more than just hit those high notes.

For her three-hour concert on Saturday night at the Araneta Coliseum, teen star Sarah Geronimo wore sexy outfits (on this spread, the ones made by designer Rajo Laurel)—even short shorts in one number—and showed off a lot of new moves, especially during a spot with Gary Valenciano.

Aptly, the concert was titled, "Sarah In Motion."

The singer emerged in a tight-fitting silver dress that revealed her curves as she danced a medley of upbeat songs. This opener was more about dancing than anything, and it helped that the stage lighting was superb.

THE ATTEMPT to transform her from teen to young woman, with such gowns as these by Rajo Laurel, was okay, too.

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

People still like Sarah Geronimo as a sweet, unaffected girl with great talent

Sarah did three other dance sequences, including a showdown with teen actor John Pratts during a Michael Jackson medley. Yes, she did the Moonwalk.

The concert was meant to present Sarah's "transformation from teen princess to glamour woman." As such, the seven different gowns she wore was a major part of the act.

Her second song was her original "Sa Iyo," recorded a couple of years back. It was used as campaign jingle by Sen. Edgardo Angara, who was in the audience. He gave Sarah a bouquet of flowers at evening's end.

The star of the show also did a medley of her biggest hits—"To Love You More," "I Still Believe in Loving You" and "How Could You Say You Love Me."

In spite of the "mature" projection, Sarah was a young girl all over again whenever she thanked family members, friends and sponsors in her long spiels.

All in all, it was not the skimpy and/or shiny costumes that reaped thunderous applause for her, but the trademark belting.

The highest notes were delivered via Beyonce's "Listen." Sarah's pitch-perfect rendition showcased her strong,

MORE/ E4

INSIDE

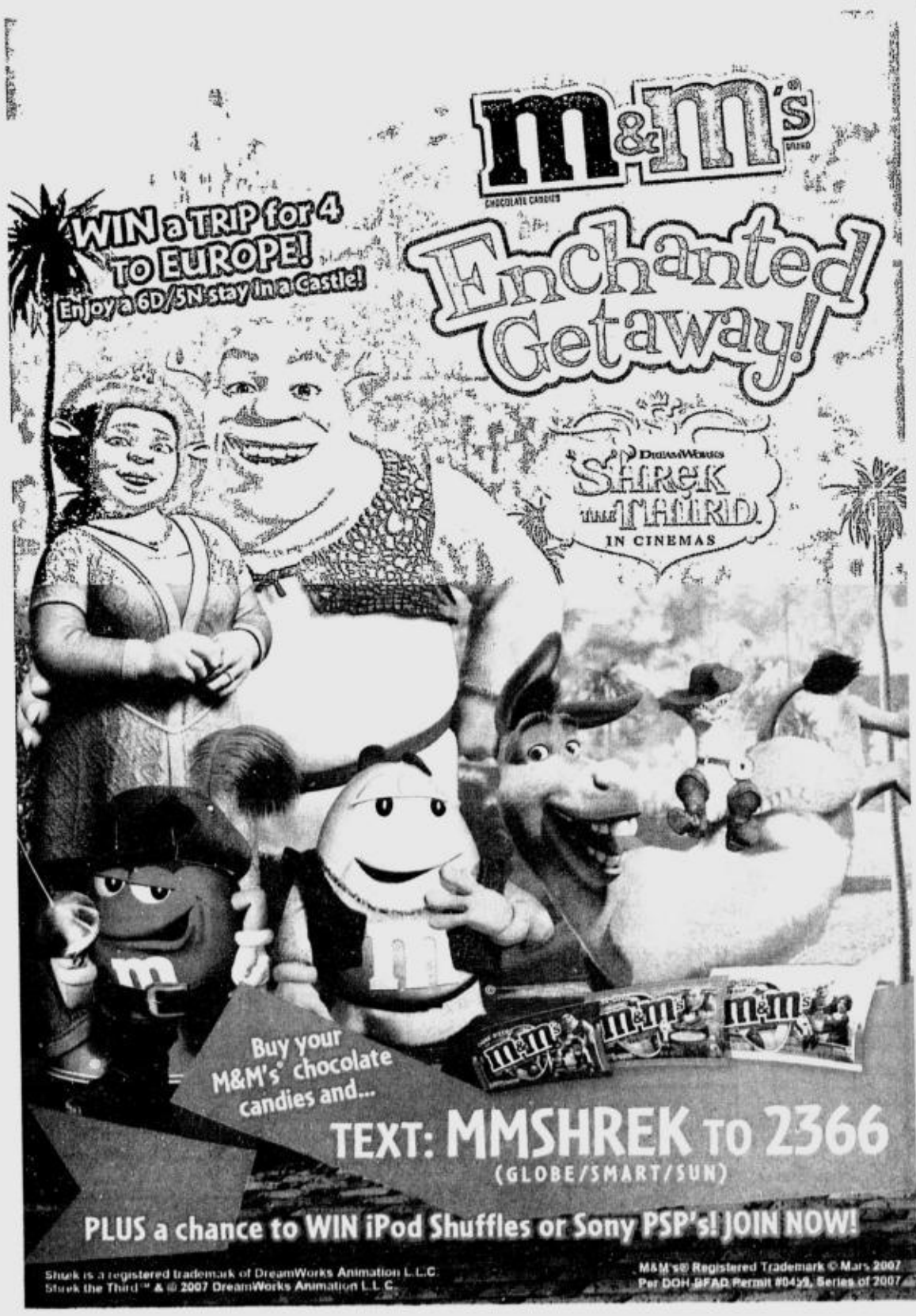
■ **Conquering death in 'Die Hard 4.0'** Viewfinder /E3

■ **Another day in 'hell' in '24' season** 6 Review /E4

■ **A very busy indie film scene** /F1

■ **Amalia doesn't want to end up like Nida** Dollywood /F4

■ **Which tycoon paid for ex-hunk's property?** Rushes /F3



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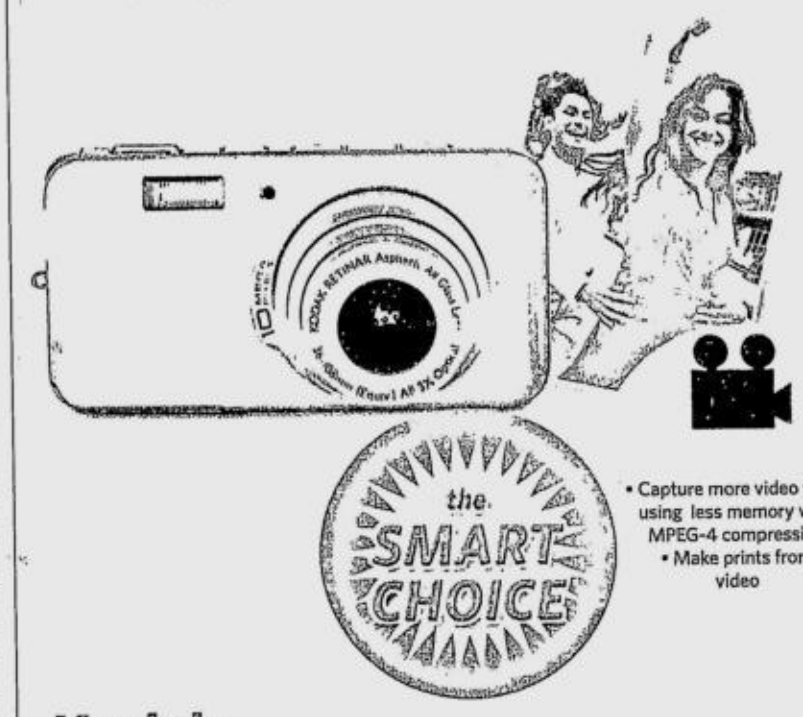

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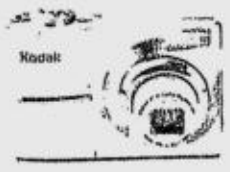

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3 DIE HARD 4	8 indieSine: MORENO
4 TRANSFORMERS	9 IN THE LAND of WOMEN
5 VACANCY	10 HARRY POTTER 5

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4 HARRY POTTER - 5 / DIE HARD

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1 VACANCY
2 HARRY POTTER - 5

Jade Cinema
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2 VACANCY
3 NEXT
4 TRANSFORMERS

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3 TRANSFORMERS
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Centre Plaza Cinema
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1 TRANSFORMERS
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2 HARRY POTTER - 5
3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 DIE HARD 4.0 / TRANSFORMERS

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7260159

3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 (dolby digital ex) VACANCY
5 RESERVED

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8904205, 8433994

1 TRANSFORMERS
2 DIE HARD 4.0
3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 VACANCY

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3 HARRY POTTER - 5
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1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 HARRY POTTER - 5
3 TRANSFORMERS

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
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1 PLANET TERROR
2 HARRY POTTER - 5
3 HARRY POTTER - 5
4 HARRY POTTER - 5
5 HARRY POTTER - 5
6 TRANSFORMERS
7 DIE HARD 4.0
8 TIYANAKS
9 VACANCY
10 WHITE NOISE - 2

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1 PREMONITION
2 DIE HARD 4.0
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 VACANCY
3 TRANSFORMERS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 TIYANAKS
2 HARRY POTTER - 5

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4746

1 BUG
2 TRANSFORMERS

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (dolby) HARRY POTTER - 5
2 (dolby) TRANSFORMERS
3 (dolby) VACANCY
4 (dolby) RESERVED

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 KAMANDAG NG ROSAS
3 DIE HARD 4.0
4 BUG

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 VACANCY
2 CRISELDA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 PAN'S LABYRINTH
5 HARRY POTTER - 5

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1 DIE HARD 4.0
2 HARRY POTTER - 5
3 VACANCY
4 PLANET TERROR
5 WHITE NOISE - 2

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3 CONDEMNED
4 HARRY POTTER - 5

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1 HARRY POTTER - 5
2 DIE HARD - 5
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RESERVED

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CHEER FACTOR

Elvis on rock

ESTES PARK, COLORADO—YOU CAN'T think about rock without thinking of Elvis. Not this rock, anyway.

Rock collector LaDell Alexander, 60, has found a stone she swears has the face of Elvis Presley on it. A pattern on the rock resembles a human head with dark hair and the king of rock's trademark muttonchop sideburns. *AP*

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IN THE LAND OF WOMEN – PG13	HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX G	VACANCY
TRANSFORMERS G DIE HARD 4.0 PG13	PLANET TERROR	HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX G

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SHANG CINEPLEX

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2 HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX MTRCB GP 12:15, 3:10, 6:05, 9:00

3 VACANCY MTRCB R-13 1:20, 3:30 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

4 TRANSFORMERS (GP) 1:00, 7:00 DIE HARD 4.0 (PG-13) 4:00, 10:00

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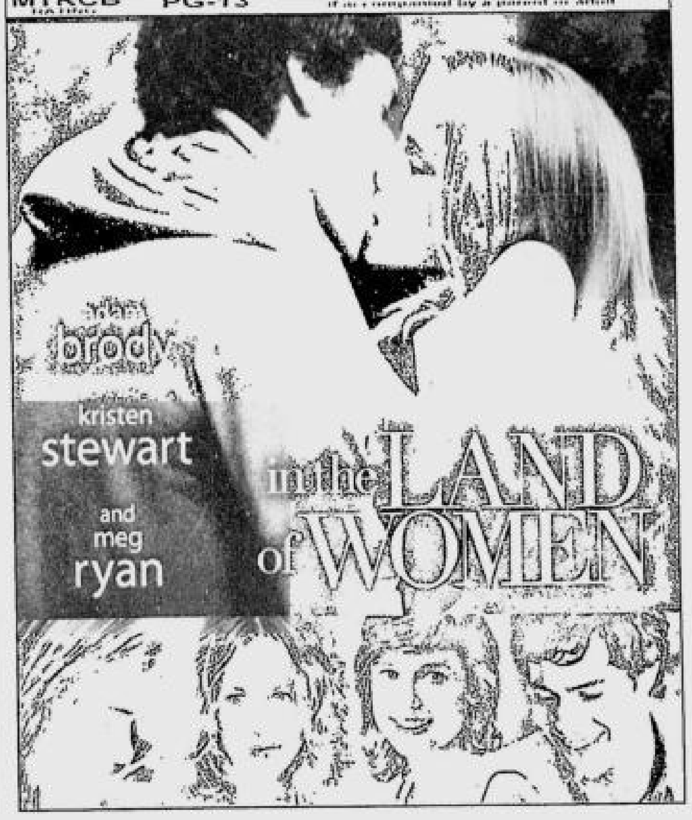

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High-tech networks no match for low-tech street smarts

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IT ISN'T ONLY BRUCE WILLIS' character, John McClane, who has seemingly conquered death in "Die Hard 4.0"—even his enemies turn out to be virtually indestructible!

Yes, almost everybody finds it very hard to die in the fourth screen outing for Willis' signature character, and the viewer has to suspend his disbelief many times over to accommodate their incredibly high survival rate!

Well, it's just a slam-bang action fantasy, so don't give your sense of logic and empathy too much of a workout. Instead, have a good laugh as the movie's makers try to come up with as many visual improbabilities as possible—like a car hitting a helicopter in mid-flight! That crazy stunner of a scene is captioned by similarly droll dialogue, to wit:

McClane's sidekick: "Hey, man, you killed a helicopter with a car!"

McClane: "Yeah, I had to—I ran out of bullets!"

What cheeky fun!

The fourth "Die Hard" flick is about a mad computer genius' plot to bring the United States to its knees by gaining control of all of its key cyber intelligence systems. The arch villain (**Timothy Olyphant**) is so brilliant that he almost gets his way—until McClane and a young computer geek manage to beat him at his own complicated and high-stakes game.

They don't have an easy time of it, however. At film's end, they look as battered and tattered as two slabs of meat that have just squeezed through a meat grinder.

Despite the movie's being "just" an action fantasy, Willis gets full dramatic credit for making his signature character even more interesting than McClane used to be when he was much younger. Now that he's in his 50s, the crusty cop bears the world-weary patina of age—and cocky wisdom—that makes his action feats all the more amazing.

The fact that McClane is an "analog" character in the film's computer-savvy scenario is also appealing, because it shows that high-tech networks are no match for low-tech street smarts!

In an age when cyber intelligence threatens to make sullen slaves of us all, that's an exceedingly comforting thought.

Aside from Willis, the other actor here who seems to be utterly "unkillable" is **Maggie Q**, who plays the mad nemesis' main squeeze and computer queen.

When McClane catches her about to plunge the entire United States into darkness, her character, Mai, retaliates with a flurry of martial arts moves that catch him off-guard.

Even after he has retaliated and sent her to kingdom come many times over, she "miraculously" recovers to fight him one more time. Only after she has truly breathed her last do we—and McClane—finally relax.

So, we daresay that "Die Hard 4.0" is an important movie in Maggie Q's rise to international stardom. Henceforth, she will be seen as the cinematic cat with nine lives—and then some!

Noel Azcona

The Great Performances Series resumes on Aug. 18 at the Philamlife Theater with a special recital of distinguished baritone **Noel Azcona**, with soprano **Rachel Gerodias** and pianist **Mary Anne Espina**. Call 900-7023. On Sept. 7, Azcona will also perform in Bacolod City, at the Fisher Hotel ballroom, with soprano **Nenen Espina**.

Lea in Catholic Digest

The July issue of Catholic Digest, a 71-year-old publication in the United States, features **Lea Salonga** on the cover, with the extensive cover story written by managing editor **Julie Rattey**. The article, "This is the career God has chosen for me," traces her career from age 6 to 36, and shows how her values and spirituality have sustained her through the years.

'Vacancy'

In **Nimrod Artai**'s horror thriller, "Vacancy," **Luke Wilson** and **Kate Beckinsale** play an embattled husband and wife who become unwilling "stars" of a snuff film, or a movie showing a real, not enacted, murder. The film puts the hapless couple so terrifyingly at risk that the stars were carried away by the sheer terror of the "trap, escape and recapture" scenes.

SPIN

PRINCE

Prince gives album away

LONDON—US ROCK star Prince gave his latest album away free on Sunday with a British tabloid, to the fury of music retailers.

The Minneapolis maverick, renowned for his run-ins with the music establishment, will also give away copies of "Planet Earth" at a series of London concerts starting next month.

Beggared belief

Paul Quirk, co-chair of the Entertainment Retailers Association, said Prince's decision to give away the album, which is not scheduled to go on sale until July 24, with copies of the Mail on Sunday, "beggared belief."

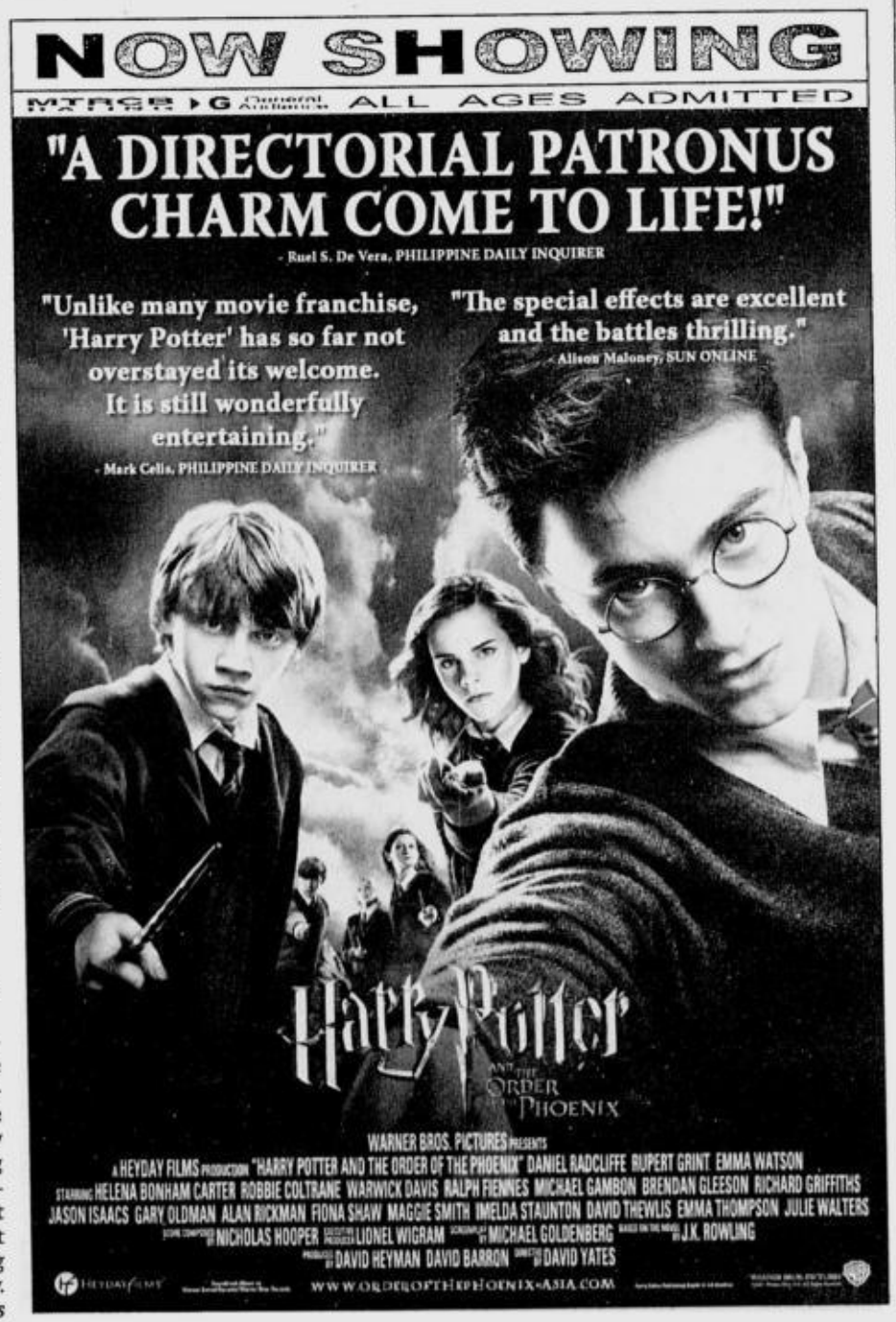
"The Artist Formerly Known as Prince should know that with behavior like this he will soon be the Artist Formerly Available in Record Stores," said Quirk in reference to the '90s when the star stopped using his name.

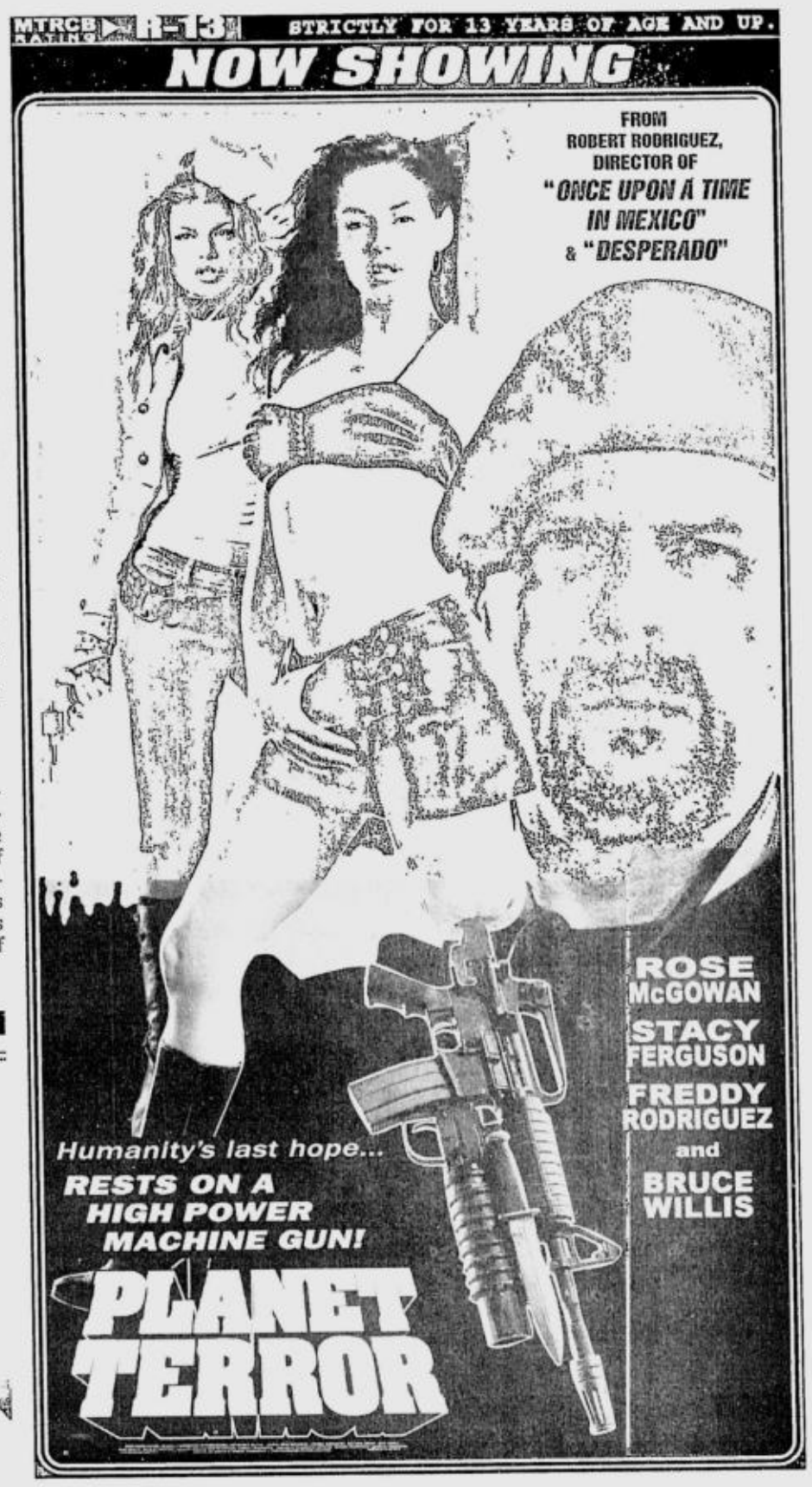
Unrepentant

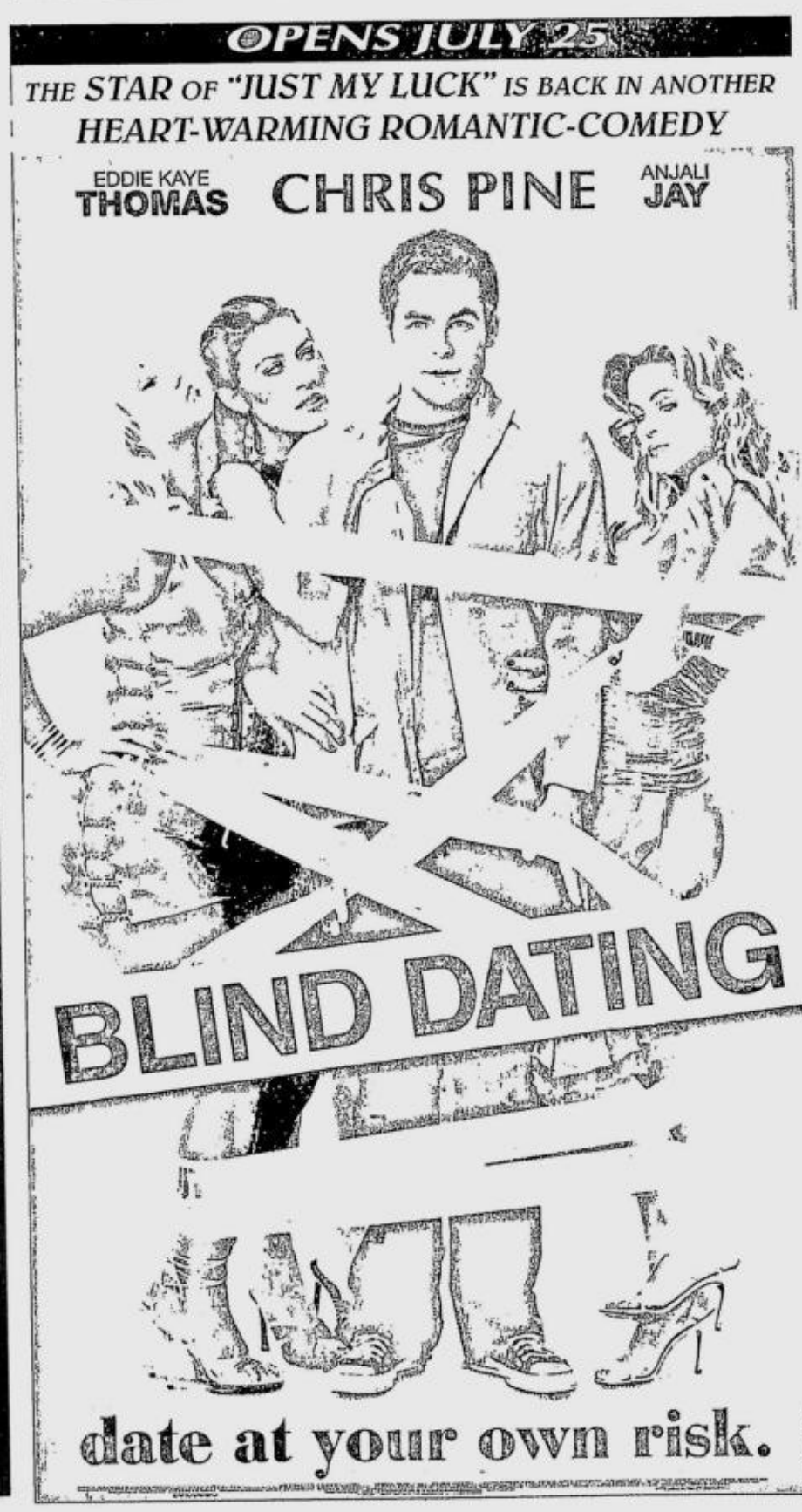
The funk artist is unrepentant.

"It's direct marketing and I don't have to be in the speculation business of the record industry which is going through a lot of tumultuous times right now," he said about why he was giving his music away.

Reuters







'24' season six: Another day in 'hell'

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

JACK'S BACK!

In the first five seasons of "24," Agent Jack Bauer (Kiefer Sutherland) faced evil in its various forms, lost loved ones and colleagues, saved countless Americans, and even survived a mission-related drug addiction.

In season six of the Emmy-winning show (airing over C/S channel, Tuesdays, 10 p.m.), the perpetually imperiled super-operative of CTU (Counter Terrorist Unit) returns to fight the usual plethora of terrorist menaces on another danger-fraught day that unfolds in the show's real time—an hour of the day per episode—format. When all hell breaks loose, you can bet that Jack's the man to set things right.

Temporary defiance

But in the previous season finale, the agent was abducted by the Chinese as punishment for his involvement in a mission that ended in tragedy. Cut to the present: he's been imprisoned and tortured for a few years, so when he's released to US custody, he's still traumatized and fidgety. He's required to serve his country once more, in the midst of a new barrage of relentless attacks.

But expectedly, he gets his groove back before the season-opener's ending. After landing in enemy custody, the handcuffed Jack realizes that his field expertise is needed again, so he savagely bites down a captor's neck to escape! He reverts to his former self, the unconventional hero who's unafraid to get his hands dirty for the sake of others.

But soon enough, the new season disappointingly goes through the motions and replicates previously seen situations like narrow escapes, chaos in Los Angeles, and Jack's temporary defiance of his superiors.

This is, by far, the most predictable "day" of the series. Prior to this, the suspense is kept alive by a number of things, including the sudden elimination of other characters, as anyone (except Jack) can die unexpectedly. The body count isn't as affecting as previous seasons, partly because the repetitiveness adds to the desensitization, and explosive developments sometimes feel like story-padding devices that are forced to culminate in big cliffhangers by the hour's end. And while there are still unforeseen deaths of developed characters here, there will be inevitable comparisons to past shockers.

KIEFER Sutherland and Rena Sofer

What's different this time is the choice of antagonists. The Bauer family tree isn't comprised of noble patriots, it's revealed. Also, the new president, Wayne Palmer (D.B. Woodside) is being advised by Tom Lennox (Peter MacNicol, formerly of "Ally McBeal"), who believes in curtailing some citizens' liberties for the country to survive that day of terror. The complicated repercussions of the decision-making in this front also impact CTU and even the president's sister, Sandra Palmer (Regina King). But through the course of the story, crucial and welcome transformations typically occur.

KIM RAVER

Formula works

The distinct narrative formula still works, but experimentation at this point might make it unpredictable again. Perhaps a brainwashed, totally malevolent Jack can fight CTU for almost an entire season? Then we'll really see how bad that day can get!

There are other ideas that can work, and the story lines can draw from its already solid continuity without rehashing old plots. Yes, "24" can still be the stunning, discomfiting show it used to be.

There isn't any series like it, but it needs to inject some much-needed elements to make established figures like Jack Bauer and his stalwart allies evolve further.

More than just high notes

From page E1

solid voice.

"The Prayer" was a heartfelt performance, though a bit distracting because of a perceived attempt to sound exactly like Celine Dion.

Awkwardly—inevitably?— the concert turned into a one big promotional event, too, for her upcoming soap opera "Pangarap na Bituin." Co-star Jericho Rosales sang a medley of bouncy tunes and, with Sarah, the soap's theme. Some production numbers were obviously excuses to highlight the numerous products she endorses.

A DANCE song medley with Gary V

Thankfully, Ai Ai Delas Alas was around to provide comic relief. She was onstage for less than 15 minutes, but the fans appeared to really enjoy her antics.

For instance, Sarah was singing the jukebox classic "Bakit Ako Mahihiya?" when Ai Ai suddenly appeared, yelling, *"Itigil ang kantang yan!"*

Hilarious

She and Sarah proceeded to sing a hilarious medley of jukebox tunes rearranged with current hits: old ditties such as "Bakit (Kung Liligaya Ka Sa Piling ng Iba)," "Sayang," "Tukso" and "Isang Linggong Pag-ibig" were mixed with new stuff like "Don't Cha," "Bebot," "Irreplaceable" and "Bring Me to Life."

SPARKLING in silver

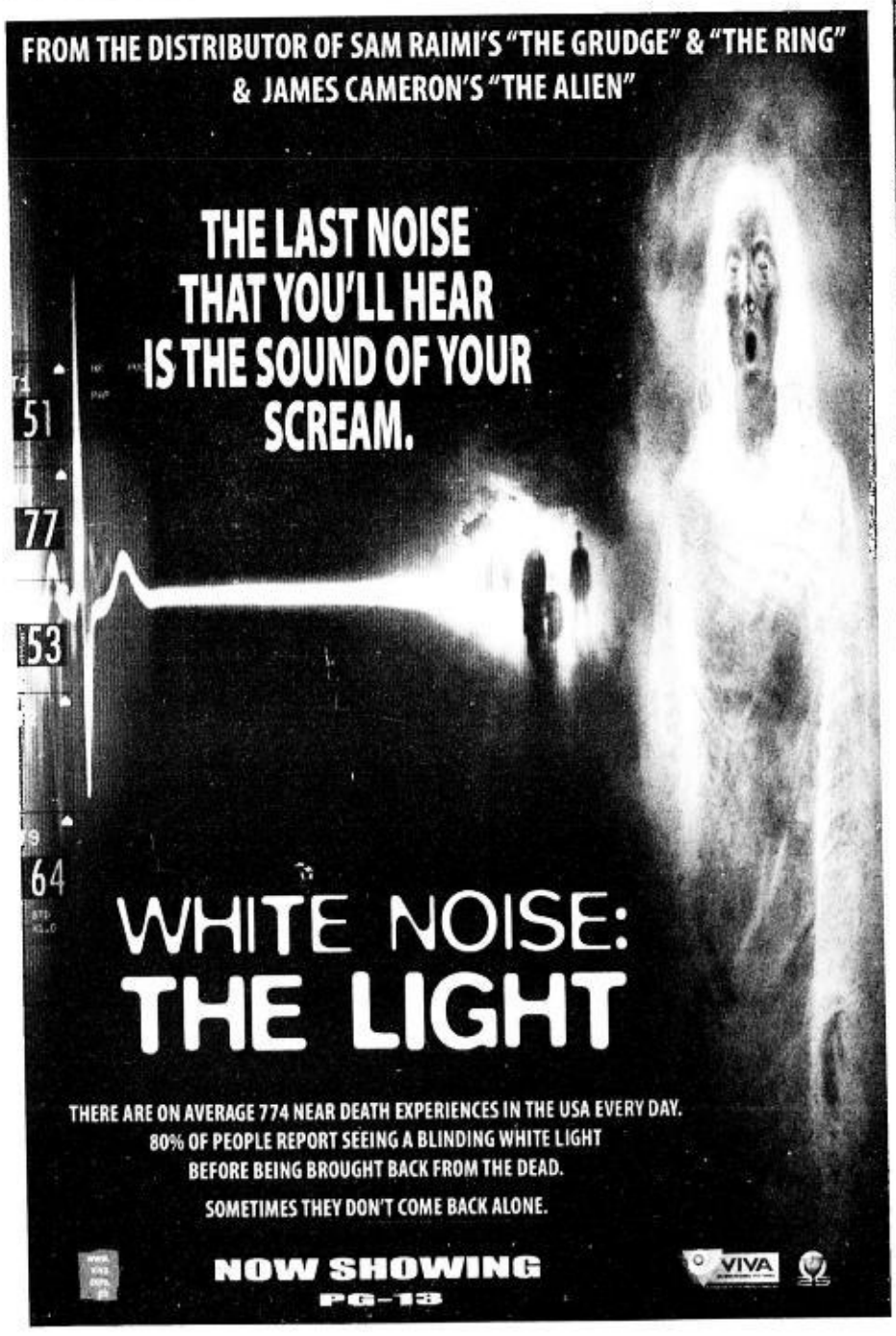
Heartthrob Sam Milby was also cheered loudly when he sang "Maging Sino Ka Man," theme of his recently concluded soap opera; and did Bon Jovi songs in a duet with Sarah.

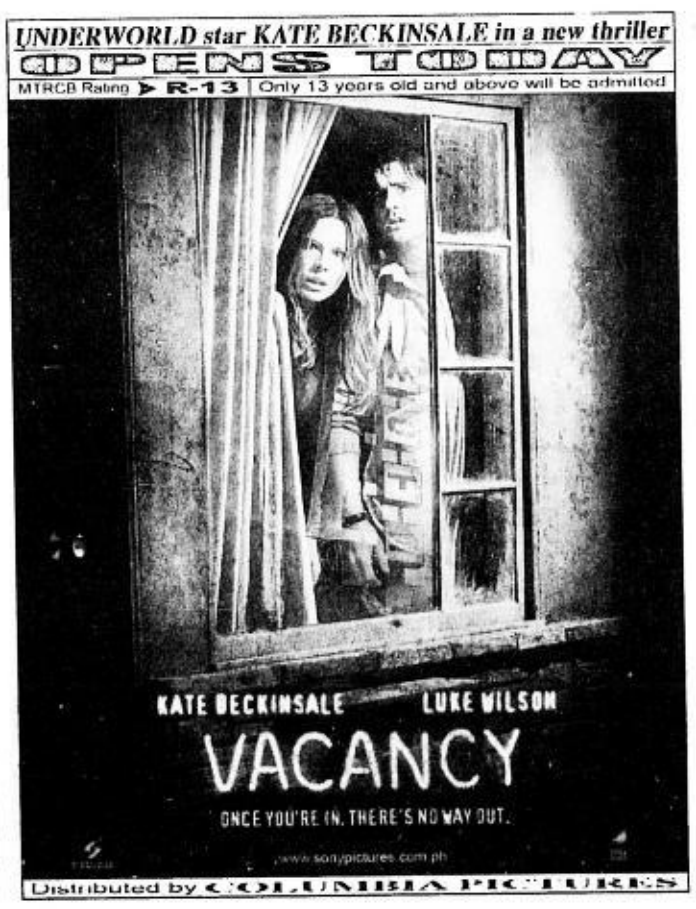
Mark Bautista also sang a duet with the star of the show, as did Gary Valenciano, with a medley of Justin Timberlake songs.

Sarah sounded very tired when it came time for the highest notes—in the closing song, "Forever's Not Enough." After this number, people started filing out of the coliseum even if she had not said goodbye.

After security guards turned them back from the exits into the hall, Sarah emerged in a new dress, with yet another medley of dance songs.

Fans later lined up to give her flowers, and she gamely posed for snapshots with them. The attempt at a metamorphosis was okay, but still people are bound to remember not her new look, but her old sweet ways.





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A very busy indie scene

ADOLF Alix's "Kadin (The Goat)"

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE INDEPENDENT film circuit is on a busy mode, with local films winning top awards and taking part in festivals around the globe.

Jeffrey Jeturian's "Kubrador (The Bet Collector)," for instance, has officially received its 50th invitation, this one from the Vienna International Film Festival in Austria in October.

"Having reached my target, I'm retiring from my film fest search for 'Kubrador,'" producer Joji Alonso told INQUIRER Entertainment.

Alonso is very pleased that the three major film markets—in Toronto, Pusan and Rotterdam—were interested in "Kubrador."

Squatterpunk

An annual international festival of short films and documentaries in Italy has paid tribute to prize-winning Filipino indie director Khavn dela Cruz by presenting a retrospective of his works.

Dela Cruz's short films "Toxic Mango," "Squatterpunk" and "Small Ali" were featured in a segment called "Night Off: Homage to Khavn" of the 6th Euganea Movie Movement International Festival of Short Film and Documentary.

The films were screened on July 12 at the Quarry of the Rocca in Monselice, according to its website www.euganeamoviemovement.it. The festival

A VERY BUSY/ F2

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PLANET TERROR 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
TRANSFORMERS 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50
DIE HARD 4 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50
HARRY POTTER 5 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
MALL 5
1 VACANCY 1:10 / 3:05 / 5:00 / 6:55 / 8:50
2 WHITE NOISE 2 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35
3 HARRY POTTER 5 12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
4 PLANET TERROR 12:45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:15
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"KUBRADOR"

"SQUATTERPUNK"

A busy indie scene

From page F1

ran from July 8 to 15.

"Squatterpunk," a film set in the slums of Manila, follows the lives of children who scavenge for garbage for a living. It is also set to tour three Australian cities, namely Brisbane, Canberra and Sydney, in August. It will also be shown at the third Cinemalaya Philippine International Film Festival this month and the first Jesuit Media Convention in August.

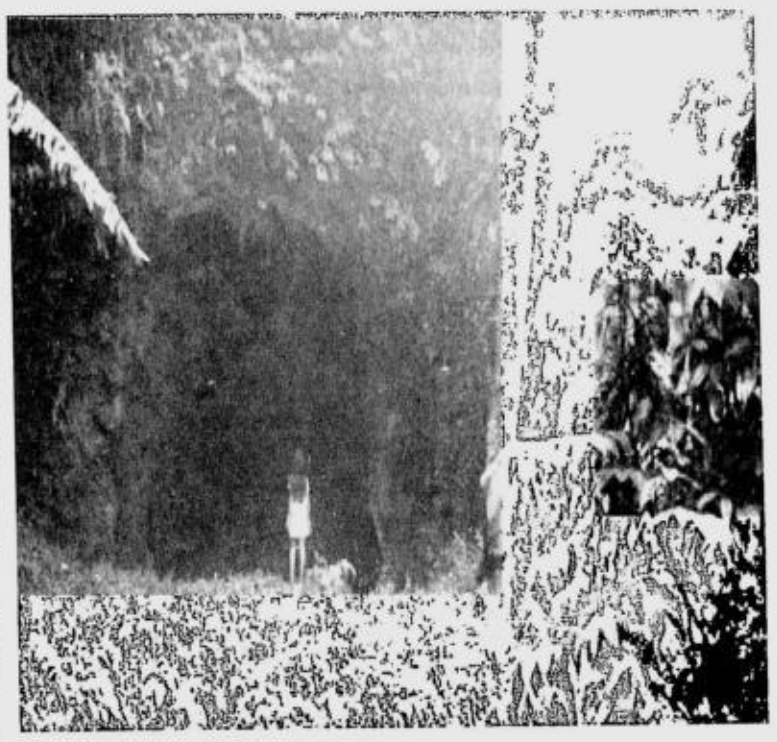
Huling Balyan/Autohystoria

"Huling Balyan ng Buhi," a Cinema One Original Digital movie by Sheras Anthony Sanchez, won the grand prize under the Film and Sound category in the 18th International Documentary Film Festival of Marseille in France.

"Huling Balyan" centers on Gigi, a tribal princess as she deals with conflict arising from war between communist insurgents and the military.

Incidentally, Raya Martin's "Authohystoria" won a special mention in the international competition category, according to its website www.fid-marseille.org-palmares

Martin's film is a quasi-autobiographical account of two city brothers paralleling with the Filipino historical figures Andres and Procopio Bonifacio.



"HULING BALYAN NG BUHI"

Baliw

Redd Ochoa's "Baliw" has been accepted in this year's World Film Festival in Montreal, Canada, to be held from Aug. 23 to Sept. 3.

"Baliw" is Ochoa's attempt to show what goes through the mind of a criminal before, during and after the commission of a crime.

According to festival programmers, it is the only entry that has been selected from among the films submitted from the Philippines. "Baliw" will compete against entries from the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia and Oceana.

"BALIW"

Kadin

Adolf Alix's "Kadin (The Goat)" will be screened in the 60th Locarno International Film Festival in Italy this August.

The film will be under the new section titled, Ici el ailleurs (Here and Elsewhere), which offers a "choice of films sharing an original vision ... powerful works that arouse debate," according to the website www.pardo.ch.

Alix's "Donsol," as well as "Kubrador" and Dante Mendoza's "Manoro" will be competing at the Bangkok International Film Festival starting July 21 to 29.

Alix, Jeturian and Mendoza will be flying to Thailand to attend the event. With Jeturian are "Kubrador" writers Joel Jover and Amado "Bing" Lao.

IFCP

Meanwhile, the Independent Filmmakers Cooperative of the Philippines (IFCP), an organization jointly owned and managed by individuals involved in the production of indie movies, has announced a new set of officers on Monday.

Its new board directors are Doy del Mundo (chair), Chits Jimenez, Marge Templo, Paulo Villaluna and Wilma Manda.

Coreen Jimenez chairs the audit committee, with Vives Asuncion and Jim Libiran as members.

The credit committee is headed by Ron Bryant, with members Ricky Davao and Khavn dela Cruz.

Mike Dagñalan, who heads the conciliation committee, are joined by Mike Sandejas and Dave Hukom.

The elections committee is chaired by Emman dela Cruz, with Jay Abello and Aloy Adlawan as members.

Templo was elected IFC secretary while Manda, the coop's marketing manager.

"The new and old board directors will soon meet for a turnover," Chits Jimenez told INQUIRER Entertainment last week. "We're all excited. We have so many plans."

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7 TRANSFORMERS
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 WHITE NOISE
10 PLANET TERROR
11 HARRY POTTER 5
12 DIE HARD 4

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
2 VACANCY
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 PLANET TERROR
6 DIE HARD 4
7 TRANSFORMERS
8 HARRY POTTER 5
9 HARRY POTTER 5
10 HARRY POTTER 5
11 WHITE NOISE
12 TIYANAKS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 FIREHOUSE DOG
2 WHITE NOISE
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 VACANCY
7 HARRY POTTER 5
8 TIYANAKS
9 DIE HARD 4
10 TRANSFORMERS
11 PLANET TERROR
12 THE GROOMSMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 DIE HARD 4
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 VACANCY
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 PLANET TERROR
8 TIYANAKS
9 WHITE NOISE
10 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 VACANCY
3 WHITE NOISE
4 PLANET TERROR
5 DIE HARD 4
6 TRANSFORMERS

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
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2 PLANET TERROR
3 VACANCY
4 HARRY POTTER 5
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7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
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2 PLANET TERROR
3 WHITE NOISE
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4 VACANCY

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2 TRANSFORMERS
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3 TRANSFORMERS
4 DIE HARD 4
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6 VACANCY

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3 VACANCY
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3 DIE HARD 4
4 BORDERTOWN
5 VACANCY
6 NEXT

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 DIE HARD 4
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 NEXT

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 DIE HARD 4
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 TRANSFORMERS

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 VACANCY
2 DIE HARD 4
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 INVISIBLES
4 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349911
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 CONDEMNED
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 VACANCY

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 VACANCY
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DIE HARD 4
6 NEXT

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 VACANCY
4 DIE HARD 4

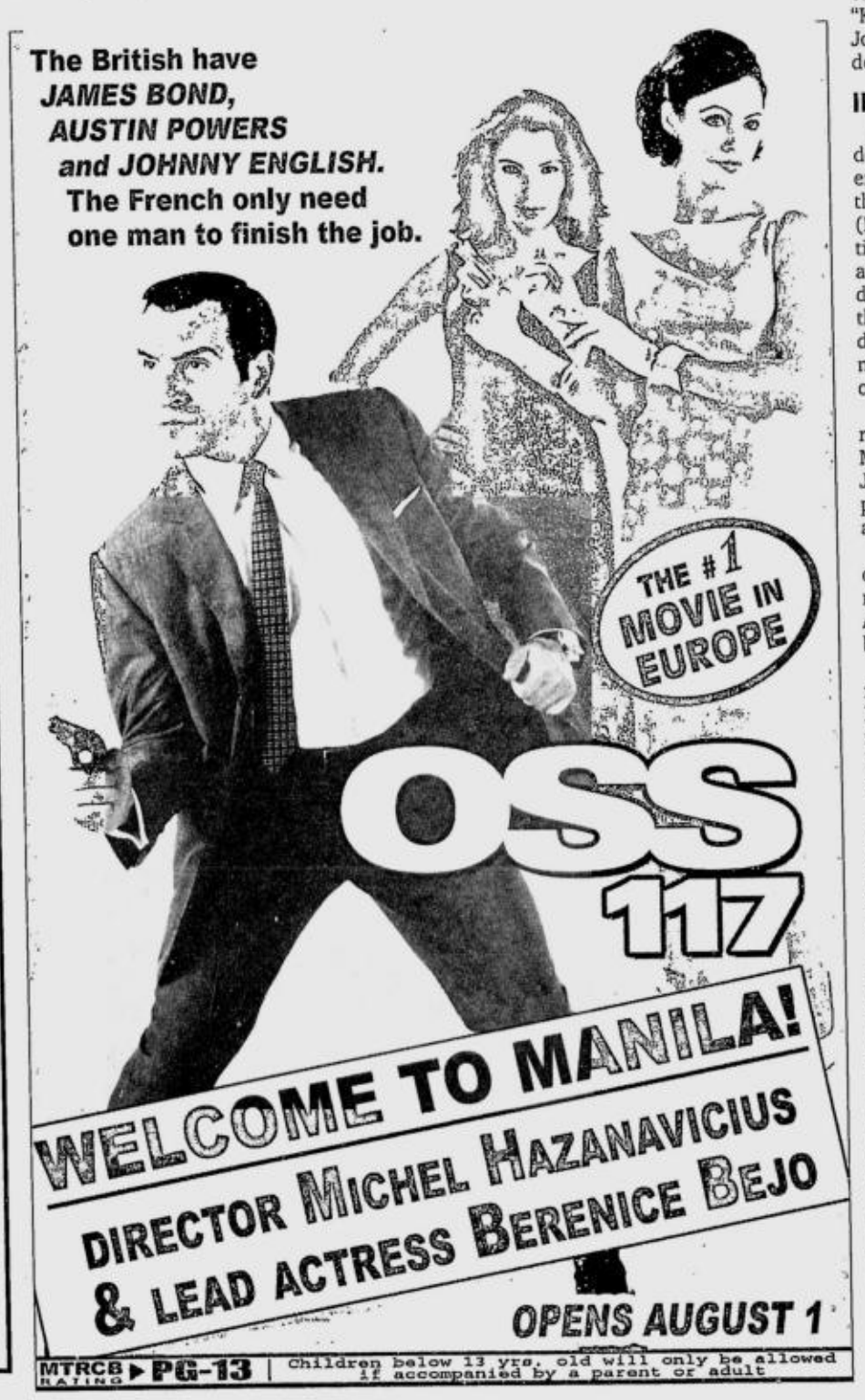
VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 RESERVED
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 BUG
5 VACANCY
6 HARRY POTTER 5
7 RESERVED
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 NEXT
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 VACANCY
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 DIE HARD 4
7 TRANSFORMERS
8 HARRY POTTER 5

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 VACANCY
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 FRACTURE

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA



Tycoon pays for ex-hunk's property

RUSHES

WHY DON'T YOU ALL COME UP ON stage?"

With these words, Ryan Cayabyab sent Japanese security in a frenzy. It had been raining all day in Tokyo and on the Department of Tourism's Philippine Fiesta 2007 concert in Yoyogi park.

What started as a drizzle was fast turning into a downpour, and so the audience didn't need a second invitation.

"It was so much fun!" Mr. C told us when we bumped into him later that afternoon in the Ginza district. And because not all the hundreds who had turned up could fit onstage, Bituin Escalante grabbed an umbrella and hurried down the steps to join the soaked crowd. And she sang there in their midst. Bravo.

Confirmed!

While unloading a piece of property, a promising young filmmaker met this award-winning actor who's now semi-retired. The star expressed interest in the property, and the deal was soon sealed.

The director was shocked when he received a check payment withdrawable from the account of a prominent tycoon. What better way to confirm early rumors of a dangerous liaison between the businessman and the former hunk?

* * *

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's *chiz* on TV:

•"I'm so happy, super *tahimik!*" said "The Buzz" co-host Ruffa Gutierrez when asked about her life at present. (The following day, media was tailing her again because of the criminal case that Yilmaz Bektas filed against her.)

•The verbal exchange between former couple Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez ended with the former saying: "A lot of words are being exchanged. Right now ... it's important that I listen to ... my children. I just received a text message from my son Robin asking me to ... just solve the problem."

RYAN CAYABYAB

REGINE VELASQUEZ

OGIE ALCASID

For sale, for love

•When a feng shui practitioner told Ara Mina that she wouldn't be lucky in love unless she vacated her Quezon City home, the actress immediately decided to sell it—plus her condo unit, for good measure—and buy a house elsewhere. The girl knows her priorities.

•There was a lot of tension when Rufa Mae Quinto and couple Dingdong Avanzado and Jessa Zaragoza met on the set of "Show Biz Central." The trio had not spoken for almost seven years—or since Dingdong dumped Rufa Mae for Jessa.

"*Okay na ako ngayon*, promise," said Rufa Mae. "*Pero bakit si* Jessa *ang pinili mo*, Dingdong?"

***

Readers' tussle

It feels to us like a case of misdirected anger: a spate of letters from show biz watchers who are violently reacting to the Ogie Alcasid-Regine Velasquez non-issue. Ogie and Regine should stop explaining whenever they're asked, if they really want to stop calling attention to themselves. (Ah, there's the rub.)

Let us include some of these letters, just this once, in this corner.

•From one who requested anonymity (via e-mail): "I hope Regine's new 'status' doesn't get in the way of bigger opportunities that await her. I also wish she didn't allow the romance to get played up more than her singing. Unfortunately, this should mean no romantic movies with Ogie, less romantic duets, and more mature displays of affection between the two of them."

•From Hailey Dizon (shane_hailey@yahoo.com): "*Si* Ogie *nga ang humahatak pababa sa* career *ni* Regine. *Lalo na ngayon, ginawa pa niyang kabit.*"

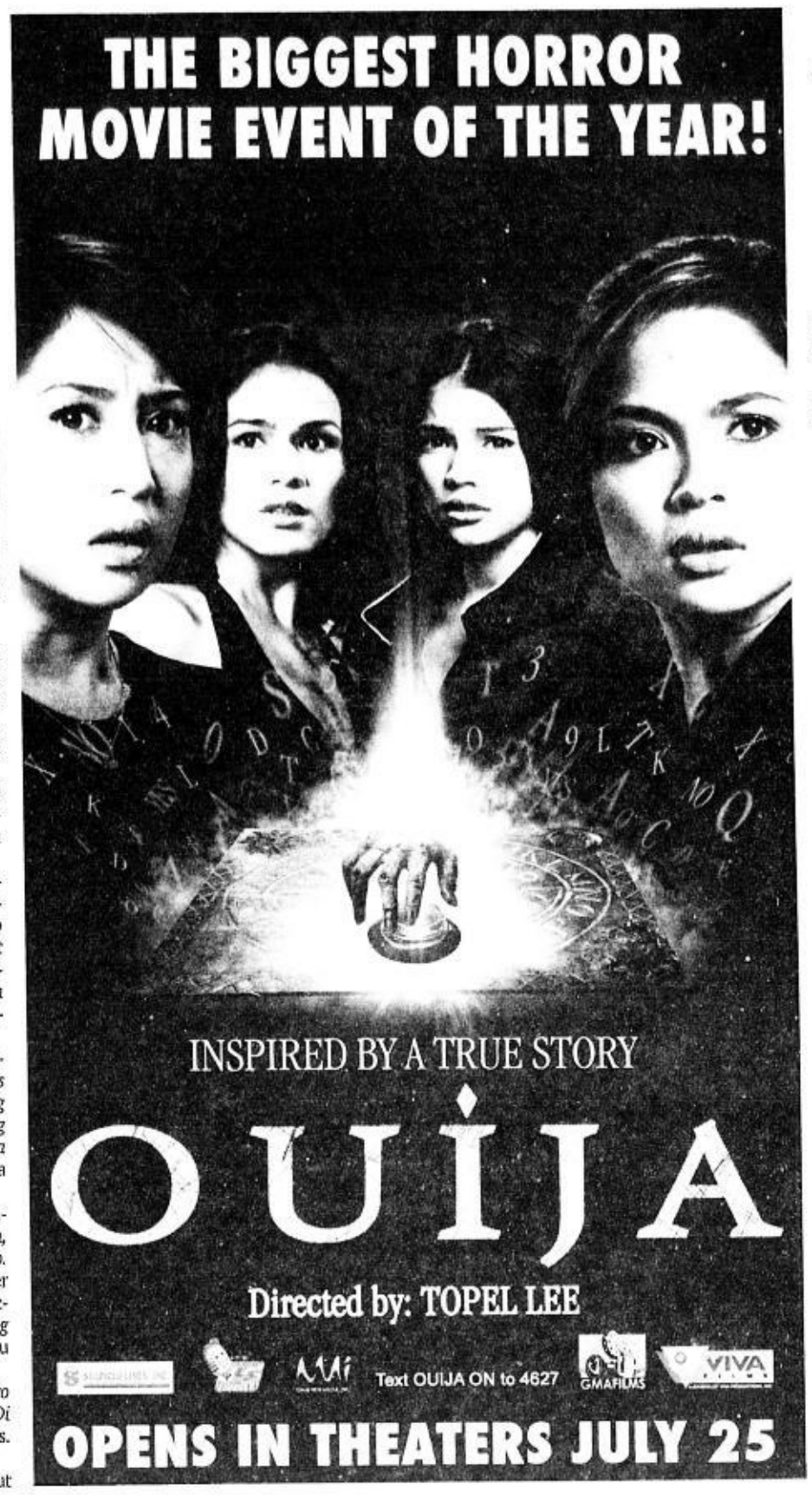
•From "Ekims Cutee" (inyaki2k2@yahoo. com): "*Tigilan n'yo na kami sa mga palabas n'yo. 'Di na kayo nakakatuwa. Matatanda na kayo at nakakaumay na pag-usapan.* Ogie Alcasid, *tigilan mo na ang papapa-*cute *sa* fans *ni* Regine...*isa kang malaking* Orocan *at manggagamit.*

"*Hinding-hindi naman makakalimutan ng mga barkada ko ang pambabastos mo sa mga* fans ni Regine *'nung kasagsagan ng kasikatan niya. N'ung opening ng* bar *mo, sobrang higpit mo sa [amin]. Pinaiwan mo pa lahat ng* camera *[namin] sa labas.*

"*Pero naipuslit namin 'yung isang* camera...*sobrang sama ng tingin mo sa akin, kulang na lang, murahin mo ako. Pinalapitan mo pa ako sa isang* bar tender *mo para sawayin ako sa pagkuha ng* picture *ni* Regine. *Tapos, 'nung nakaraang* 'Showbiz Central' ... *parang bang* you care for Regine's fans."

"*At sa* GMA 7, *puwede ba, tigilan n'yo na ang pagkunsinti sa dalawang 'yan. Di na sila mga bata para magpa-*tweetums. *Nakakasuka na!*"

Wow. Irate readers can put Rushes out of business.



AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 WHITE NOISE 2: THE LIGHT	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 PLANET TERROR	4 DIE HARD 4.0
GLORIETTA 4	1 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	2 VACANCY	3 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 WHITE NOISE 2: THE LIGHT	5 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN	6 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	7 TRANSFORMERS
GREENBELT 1	1 VACANCY	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 VACANCY GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX		
	3 TRANSFORMERS	4 VACANCY	5 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 VACANCY	4 NEXT
MARKET! MARKET!	1 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	2 PLANET TERROR		
	3 WHITE NOISE 2: THE LIGHT	4 DIE HARD 4.0	5 VACANCY	
TRINOMA	1 WHITE NOISE 2: THE LIGHT	2 TRANSFORMERS	3 VACANCY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 PLANET TERROR	6 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	7 THX HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	

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AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

Glorietta	Avida Home Expo July 20 to 22, 2007
Greenbelt	Brazilian Latino Jazz Night July 18, 2007 at Greenbelt 2
Alabang Town Center	Electroworld Exhibit July 13 to 22, 2007
Ayala Center Cebu	Accounting Quiz Bowl July 18, 2007
Market! Market!	BPI Appliance Madness July 6 to 22, 2007

Onstage
ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007.
For bookings, pls. call 752-7842 or 757-3861

Ayala Museum
Damian Domingo: The First Great Filipino Painter Exhibit - June 19 to June 6, 2008
Pioneers of Philippine Art - June 15 to January 6, 2008
For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

Tri Noma
BARBIE BIRTHDAY BASH
July 1 (2PM & 4PM) at the Activity Center
HUMAN'S RICO BLANCO EXHIBIT
July 2 to 15 (Mall Hours) at the 1st Level Exhibit Area

OPENING TODAY

Planet Terror

Stars Rose McGowan, Bruce Willis, Stacy Ferguson, Freddy Rodriguez

Directed by Robert Rodriguez

One half of the "Grindhouse" double bill of Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino, "Planet" is a "campy contribution to the zombie genre," asserts Tom Charity of CNN.com. "[It] certainly gives the audience its money's worth … jam-packed with lurid mayhem it scarcely leaves any breathing room." Ty Burr of Boston Globe comments: "[It's] shallow, but it may be Rodriguez's most consistent piece of work."

Vacancy

Stars Kate Beckinsale, Luke Wilson, Frank Whaley, Andrew Fiscella

Directed by Nimrod Antal

An unsuspecting couple (Beckinsale and Wilson) checks in a roadside motel equipped with hidden cameras. Turns out the guests, who are not allowed to check out, are cast as "stars of a snuff film." Sam Adams of Los Angeles Times thinks it's "a ruthlessly efficient stalk-and-slash machine … that suddenly becomes a critique of sadistic thrillers." Scott Bowles of USA Today states that "[it] suffers from too many horror flick clichés to draw any real 'Psycho' parallels … but [it] opts for suspense over graphic violence."

In the Land of Women

Stars Meg Ryan, Adam Brody, Kristen Stewart, Olympia Dukakis

Directed by Jon Kasdan

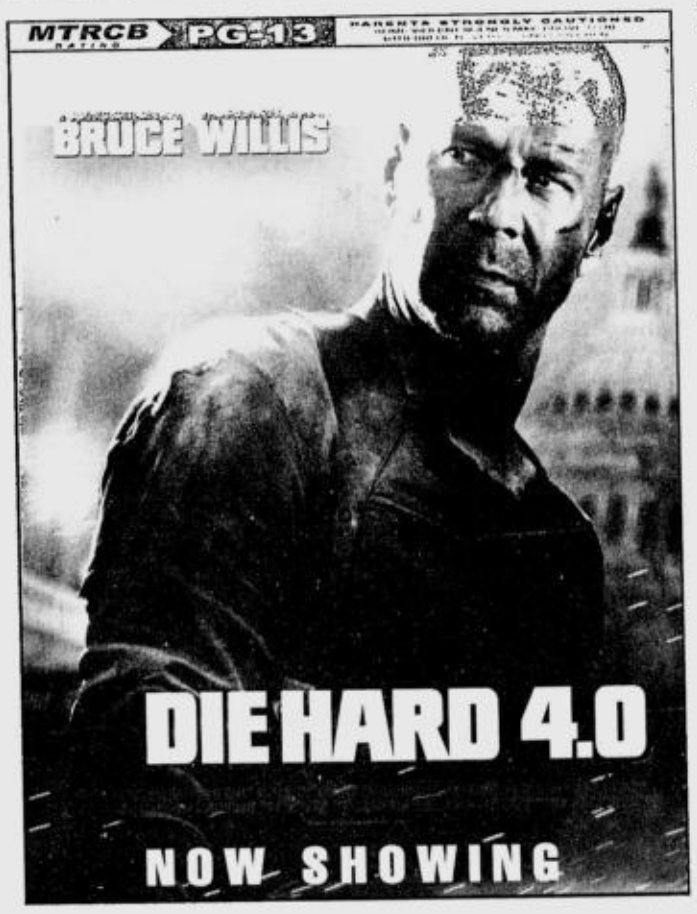
A luckless scriptwriter (Brody) leaves Hollywood to care for an ailing grandma (Dukakis) in Michigan and stumbles on love along the way. Kenneth Turan of Los Angeles Times calls it "promising." Desson Thomson of Washington Post says it "feels like an eccentric but compelling memoir." Elizabeth Weitzman of New York Daily News says, "Despite its desperate attempts to appeal to every possible age group, there is no obvious audience for this movie."

White Noise: The Light

Stars Nathan Fillion, Katee Sackhoff, Adrian Holmes, Craig Fairgrass

Directed by Patrick Lussier

Despondent after the murder of his family, a man (Fillion) attempts suicide but fails. Upon his recovery, he discovers that he can see dead people. Dreadcentral.com opines: "Though it had some good visuals … it got to a point where it was overdone. There are some unintentionally hilarious moments." Says David Nusair of ReelFilm.com: "Were it not for Fillion's remarkably compelling performance, [it] would undoubtedly come off as yet another run-of-the-mill, low-rent horror sequel."



Pomeranz sings a cappella

SHOW TIME

THE SCENE IS QUITE UNUSUAL—DAVID Pomeranz performing *a cappella*, drumming away on the podium on a stage at the University of the Philippines. "I can see clearly now, the rain has gone," he sings, and the crowd warms up, swaying and clapping in rhythm.

"The Philippines is very dear to me," he explains.

And so is David Pomeranz to Filipinos. His 1999 album, "Born For You," has sold 500,000 units in the Philippines and is said to be the biggest-selling record of all time in the country.

This afternoon, however, he is promoting a volunteer program for disaster areas.

The Global Volunteer Minister Disaster Response Team is an organization geared to help in all times of catastrophes, including assisting people who get into all sorts of distress. This group was in the 9/11 tragedy in New York and since then, their numbers have doubled.

Pomeranz says he got into this endeavor when he himself was subject of the assist. While touring Asia, he experienced fatigue and was losing his voice. A Filipino volunteer named Roman not only helped him recover his voice but his energy as well—in a span of 15 minutes.

Beyond the façade of this successful singer is a man who is not embarrassed to talk about spirituality. He credits the inner peace he has attained to "a Greater Reality" that he connects with and draws strength from in daily life.

God is this Greater Reality, Pomeranz says.

Perhaps the long years of excelling in his work is his way of manifesting God in his life. Best known for the pop hits "Got To Believe in Magic," "King and Queen of Hearts" and "It's in Every One of Us," among many others, Pomeranz's songs have been recorded and performed by scores of artists including Bette Midler, Kenny Rogers, Phoebe Snow, Freddie Mercury, The Muppets, Kenny Loggins, Richie Sambora (of Bon Jovi), Dennis DeYoung (of Styx), Missy Elliott, The Carpenters, The Hollies, Harry Belafonte, Hubert Laws, Lou Rawls, Andrea Marcovicci, John Denver, Mary Travers, Leo Sayer, Eddie Kendricks (of the Temptations), Donna Summer, Glen Campbell, Lillias White, Kathie Lee Gifford and Cliff Richard (who has recorded three of Pomeranz's songs including the Top 10 UK hit, "I Still Believe in You").

Pomeranz also wrote two of Barry Manilow's hits, "Trying To Get the Feeling Again" and "Old Songs."

His work has been incorporated in film, television and the musical theater. He has starred in numerous benefit shows including those for the Philippine Red Cross.

Agnes Prieto, Contributor

Repeat performance

Willie Nepomuceno's "Feelin' Las Vegas" show held recently at the Music Museum was such a roaring success that a repeat performance is in order.

Willie's brand of comedy proved to be as timeless as the iconic characters he portrayed on stage. From Sammy Davis Jr. to Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley and the Beatles, Willie's adroit stunts was refreshing entertainment sprinkled with certain tricks reminiscent of street magicians like David Blaine.

But Willie's singular advantage over most local comics lies in his ability to repackage the most scintillating memories from the baby boom generation: His collection of character voices; his mimicking of musical instruments that take us back to the days when radio was the most popular mode of entertainment; or his enthralling split-personality rendition of Natalie and Nat King Cole.

WILLIE NEPOMUCENO

Willie is probably the only entertainer in the country who can transform an ordinary experience or lifestyle trend from the era of the 1950s and the '60s and weave it into a fascinating tapestry of memorable moments for his audience to savor, relive and laugh about.

In "Feelin' Las Vegas" Willie put together some of the best comedy routines throughout his career, reinventing and infusing it with fresh material that cater to a new audience without losing his older fan base.

Concert and theater director Roxanne Lapus and scriptwriter Monnette E. Alfon collaboratedwith Willie in the show, where the audience refused to leave even after the curtain call and two encores.

Asked what motivates his craft, Willie says, "Like all dreamers, I am fascinated by the magic of make-believe. The thought that you can make someone forget his worries even for just a little while is food for every performer. *Eh, matakaw ako*! I'm a glutton when it comes to making a live audience break into peals of laughter. That's probably why I play so many characters."

"Feelin' Las Vegas" returns to the Music Museum on July 27, 8 p.m.

Call (0917)899-7979 or (0918)933-9393.

US tour

Pinoy Dream Academy's top three winners, Yeng Constantino, Jay-R Siaboc and Ronni Liang, go on a US tour on July 21 (Anaheim, California), July 23 (San Francisco), Aug. 4 (New York), Aug. 5 (Washington), August 11 (Chicago) and Aug. 25 (Guam).

DAVID POMERANZ

Tonight

Instrumental Nite at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

Maegan Aguilar with Blush at UCC Park Cafe, Glorietta

Richard Merk and Friends at Merk's Bar

July 19

NATF and **Breaking Silence** at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

The Groove at Merk's Bar

July 20

RJ and **Moonstrucks** at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

Route 70 at Merk's Bar

July 21

Joey Bautista of Mullato at UCC Park Cafe, Glorietta

Family Affair at Merk's Bistro

July 23

Art Manuntag at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

Family Affair at Merk's Bistro

July 24

Dale Adriatico at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

Aretha and Souled Out Band at Merk's Bistro

July 25

Instrumental Nite at **RJTV Bar**. Call 899-1658

Maegan Aguilar with Blush at UCC Park Cafe, Glorietta

Richard Merk and Friends at Merk's Bar

Amalia: I don't want to end up like Nida

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

AS A CINEMA ICON, AMALIA FUENTES HAS made a lot of unforgettable films. But the dizzying turn of events in her troubled marriage to **Joey Stevens** beats all the intricate plots of her movies combined. Joey is exhausting all means to win her back but she knows better.

When Tita Nena asked him about his mistress **Angie Aznar**, Joey denied it, saying, "It's not Angie. It's **Techie**. But we're not together anymore. I can never fall for a woman like Angie whose brother was involved in the **Chiong** sisters' murder and rape case. Besides, she has such a shady background and had too much plastic surgery."

When asked about his love child with Angie, Joey told Tita Nena, "I will never deny my own flesh and blood. I don't have a kid with that woman."

After Joey's vehement denials, two unidentified men barged into the village where Tita Nena lives. They left a stern message for her to leave Angie alone. "I am afraid that what happened to **Nida (Blanca)** will happen to me. Joey is in dire financial straits because of his gambling problem. Out of desperation, he might do a **Rod Strunk**. If I die now, Joey will get half of my estate. That's why he doesn't want a separation," Tita Nena lamented.

Just like in her movies, La Amalia will never play second fiddle in this ongoing saga. Queen Nena is meant for *bida* roles only. When all this is over, she will surely ride off into the sunset with the leading man of her choice.

Before Angelina

It was a delight to bond with **Gloria Diaz**. She" one woman who doesn't seem to age.

Long before **Angelina Jolie**'s pouting lips became a sensation, Gloria already had that winning "pucker me up" look.

GLORIA DIAZ

She is looking forward to working with **Judy Ann Santos** and **Ryan Agoncillo** again in the sequel of their hit movie "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo."

"*Hindi sila* OA *mag*-PDA. Nothing too mushy," she says of her co-stars.

Gloria's own love life is ideal, too. "My boyfriend Mike and I travel a lot. When you're in a foreign land, you tend to see your partner with fresh eyes."

I asked Mike what it feels like to have a "Miss Universe" for a girlfriend. He chuckles, "I'm still in awe. Sometimes I find it hard to believe, so I kid Gloria and tell her to wear the bathing suit she wore when she won the pageant."

We all had a good laugh. Gloria and Mike are the "other first couple" when it comes to mixing laughter and love well.

French hit

"OSS 117: Cairo, Nest of Spies," the French box office hit, opens here in August. The film's director **Michel Hazanavicius** and lead actress **Berenice Bejo** are in town to meet with local movie industry movers and shakers for a better mutual understanding of Pinoy and French cinema. A "Frenoy" collaboration, *pourquoi pas?*

The movie is based on a series of French books, just like James Bond. It takes the straight play on Bond and turns it upside down into one of the funniest movies of the year. *C'est drole et magnifique!*

AMALIA FUENTES

Music fest

Today, I am en route to Malaysia for the Penang World Music Festival which runs from July 20 to 22 at the Quarry Garden, the city's newest tourist attraction.

Over a hundred musicians from 15 international bands will perform community-inspired music and showcase their ethnic diversity and traditional instruments. (Call 812-0770/843-6674.)

It is part of Malaysia's year-long celebration of its 50th Merdeka. *Terima kasih* to **Mr. Goh Meng Keng**, country manager of Malaysia Airlines, the official carrier of the festival. Will update you about my exciting sojourn. It's a welcome respite from the deafening show biz intrigues as I savor the sound of music for a change.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning July 13

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Warner Brothers

TW	LW	Title	Gross	WR
1	☆	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	$77.4 mln	1
2	1	Transformers	$36.0 mln	2
3	2	Ratatouille	$18.0 mln	3
4	3	Live Free or Die Hard	$10.8 mln	3
5	4	License to Wed	$7.4 mln	2
6	6	1408	$5.0 mln	4
7	5	Evan Almighty	$4.9 mln	4
8	7	Knocked Up	$3.6 mln	7
9	9	Sicko	$2.6 mln	4
10	10	Ocean's Thirteen	$1.9 mln	6

This Week, Last Week — Weeks In Release

☆ New release

Based on studio estimates compiled on Sunday

REUTERS